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THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Ivy and Warren Lederhos feed the German Shepherds at Weston Dog Ranch. The ornamental ironwork was made by their father, A.A. Lederhos. The house was located at 248 North Avenue until its demolition in the mid 1990s.

A. A. Lederhos and the Weston Dog Ranch

The following article is based on an interview with Ivy Lederhos Carlson, daughter of A.A. Lederhos. The Weston Historical Society would like to thank Ivy and Roy Carlson and their daughter-in-law Hella for sharing photographs and the catalogue of E. T. Ryan Iron Works, Inc, of Allston.

Born into a German farm family, Adolf Alexander Lederhos (1883 - 1933) was about six years old when his parents died and he went to live with an uncle. He learned ornamental ironwork as an apprentice and, while still in his teens, emigrated to Switzerland and thence to the United

States. Arriving in America in 1914 at age 20, he settled first in Pittsburgh, which was known as a center for the iron industry. He later moved to Boston and there he met his future wife, Susan Chapman, daughter of a Canadian immigrant family.

With several associates, Lederhos (right) established E.T. Ryan Inc. Because of anti-German sentiment during the World War I years, the ornamental ironwork company took the name Ryan rather than using a German-sounding surname. But it was Lederhos and his design ability and craftsmanship that brought success. His dedication to his craft is reflected in this statement from the catalogue preface: "We are old-fashioned enough to get more satisfaction out of beautiful designs and their execution into Wrought Iron than in the dollars and cents they may bring us."

E.T. Ryan Inc. operated a workshop in Allston and downtown store on Boylston Street where they sold their own handmade products as well as high quality domestic and imported ironwork. The catalogue illustrates fire screens, fireplace tools, andirons, lamps, candlesticks, lighting fixtures, gates, doorstops, letterboxes, art plaques and many other objects both useful and ornamental.

Lederhos and his wife, Susan (left), had two children, Warren and Ivy. In 1924 the family moved to 248 North Avenue at the corner of Viles Street, where they bought an existing one-story house and jacked it up to create a first floor with a large room for entertaining. Ivy attended the one-room North Avenue School for second and third grade and, beginning in fourth grade, rode the open jitney to the grammar school on School Street. She and her future husband, Roy Carlson, went to Weston High School together, graduating in the Class of 1936.

Sometime after World War I, Lederhos began raising purebred German Shepherds as a hobby. At the time, the breed inspired fear because of their use by police and prison guards. Lederhos brought his first dogs from Germany and set a goal of raising champions. He employed a trainer and shipped fine animals all over the country. He also served as president of the German Shepherd Club of America. His daughter Ivy recalls as many as

27 dogs, assorted goats and one pig. A hired man lived over the garage and helped take care of the animals. During the Depression, Lederhos began boarding dogs to earn extra income.

Pictures on this page show the house and barn, as well as the dog runs in the rear next to the Boston & Maine railroad tracks. Workers at E.T. Ryan used a Lederhos design to create an iron archway into the property from North Avenue, with the words *Weston Dog Ranch* and cutouts of dogs and birds. One other similar arch, probably copied from the Weston example, exists in Yarmouth Port on Cape Cod and dates from 1928.

A.A. Lederhos died in 1933. His widow continued to run the Dog Ranch into the 1940s, followed by veterinarian Terrance Burke. He

continued working there after the property was purchased in 1950 by Leonard and Edith Shulmann. Leonard operated a dog training and veterinary facility until his death in 1970, after which his widow kept it going for another two decades. In 1994, Wellesley Homes purchased the 8.6-acre property and subdivided it into 10 lots. The Colonial houses built along the new Hastings Road were criticized as being too large for their lot size and out of keeping with the neighborhood, After more than half a century as the "Weston Dog Ranch," it is not surprising that many Weston residents still use that name for the subdivision rather than the more genteel "Weston Farms." The Lederhos arch on North Avenue, pictured at left in 1994, was removed and sold at Skinner auctioneers.

by Pamela W. Fox

The Scrapbooks of Edith May West

The Society would like to thank John Sallay for his gift of three scrapbooks compiled by Edith May West (right) and used as the primary source for this article.

Turning the pages of Edith May West's three oversize scrapbooks, we enter the world of early 20th century Weston. From her teenage years until 1940, Edith pasted in photographs and memorabilia that provide a window into the life of an ordinary young woman as she graduates from high school, gets a job, marries, loses a first baby, and raises a daughter.

Edith was born in Weston in July, 1895. Her father, Robert West, died when she was only a few years old. Her mother, Nova Scotia-born Hannah Eliza (Morton) West, was remarried in 1901 to

Weston farmer Edward R. Sibley. Hannah was 44 and Edward, who was a widower, was 60. Edith grew up on the Sibley farm, in a Greek Revival house still standing at 761 Boston Post Road (left).

Edith participated enthusiastically in the rich social life of a small country town. Her scrapbook is filled with tickets, programs, playbills and mementos from events at the American Legion post, Weston Grange, First Baptist Church, and other local groups. She went to band concerts at Canobie Lake Park, banquets at fraternal lodges, ladies nights at Nuttings-on-the-Charles in Waltham, and plays at the Wilbur, Shubert, and Colonial Theaters in Boston.

Edith saved report cards for four years at Weston High School, as well as her 12th grade English home reading list (see page 8) and the words and music for the 1913 Class Song. She pasted in a complete collection of 1913 Bicentennial memorabilia, along with her invitation in 1919 to join the newly-organized Women's Community League. She saved Valentines, Christmas, New Years, and birthday cards, and even one chain letter. Excerpted on page 8 is a letter from a friend in Wellesley that shows how our pace of life and modes of communication have changed, while the preoccupations of adolescence remain the same.

According to newspaper sources, Edith's stepfather sold his farm in September, 1915, and died later that year. By 1916, Edith and her mother (left) had moved to White Lane, now Brook Road, where

they lived in one of the modest cottages built by Francis Henry Hastings for workers at the nearby Hook & Hastings organ factory. Two of her photos on this page show these houses as originally built.

In 1916, Edith pasted in a receipt for tuition and supplies at Mellors Commercial School in Waltham. She learned shorthand and got a job as a clerk and later bookkeeper at the Boston and Maine Railroad freight office in Waltham, where she made $1067.81 in the year 1918, as shown on her income tax worksheet. She had an employee railroad pass and a membership card in the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks. Also in the scrapbook is a 1918 typed request for a week's vacation in August, along with her boss's refusal.

The pages from 1919 are filled with cards congratulating Edith on her engagement to Henry Almon Crommett of Lancaster, a foreman in the sales department of C.F. Hathaway Baking Co. in Waltham. According to newspaper reports, Harry and Edith were married at her home in the presence of 25 guests. Rooms were decorated with evergreen ropes, white chrysanthemums, palms, and potted plants. Edith tucked a sample of the white *crepe de chene* dress fabric into a small envelope in her scrapbook.

After a wedding trip to the Berkshire Hills, the couple took up residence on White Lane. In July,

1920, Edith submitted a letter of resignation from her post as Assistant Cashier. She was pregnant. But Edith and Henry lost their infant son, who was born in November but died shortly thereafter at the Waltham Maternity Hospital. In her scrapbook is the funeral bill for $30.00. In April, 1923, she answered an advertisement in the *Daily Globe*, noting that she was a Protestant, age 28, with several years of office experience. She took a clerical position at the Hotel Bellevue on Beacon Street in Boston at a salary of $17.50 a week. In 1924, she and Henry had their first and only child, Phyllis Amy, born at the Cutler House in Waltham. Photos show Phyllis at Bass Rocks on the North Shore, at the Franklin Park Zoo, and at Benson's Wild Animal Farm in New Hampshire.

Edith and Henry later moved to a small house at 663 Boston Post Road directly west of the First Baptist Church. Edith was active in the church, and her scrapbook includes pictures of the new parsonage at 687 Boston Post Road. She was still living on the Boston Post Road in 1932, when the road was dedicated as the George Washington Memorial Highway in ceremonies attended by a costumed Washington on horseback.

In the late 1930s, Edith took a sales job with Maisonette Frocks. In 1938, she became manager of a new branch of the Newton-based Tip-Top Cleaners & Tailors at 478 Boston Post Road. The third scrapbook ends in 1940. From town records we know that she was living with her mother at No. 663 when Hannah died in 1949 at age 91.

by Pamela W. Fox

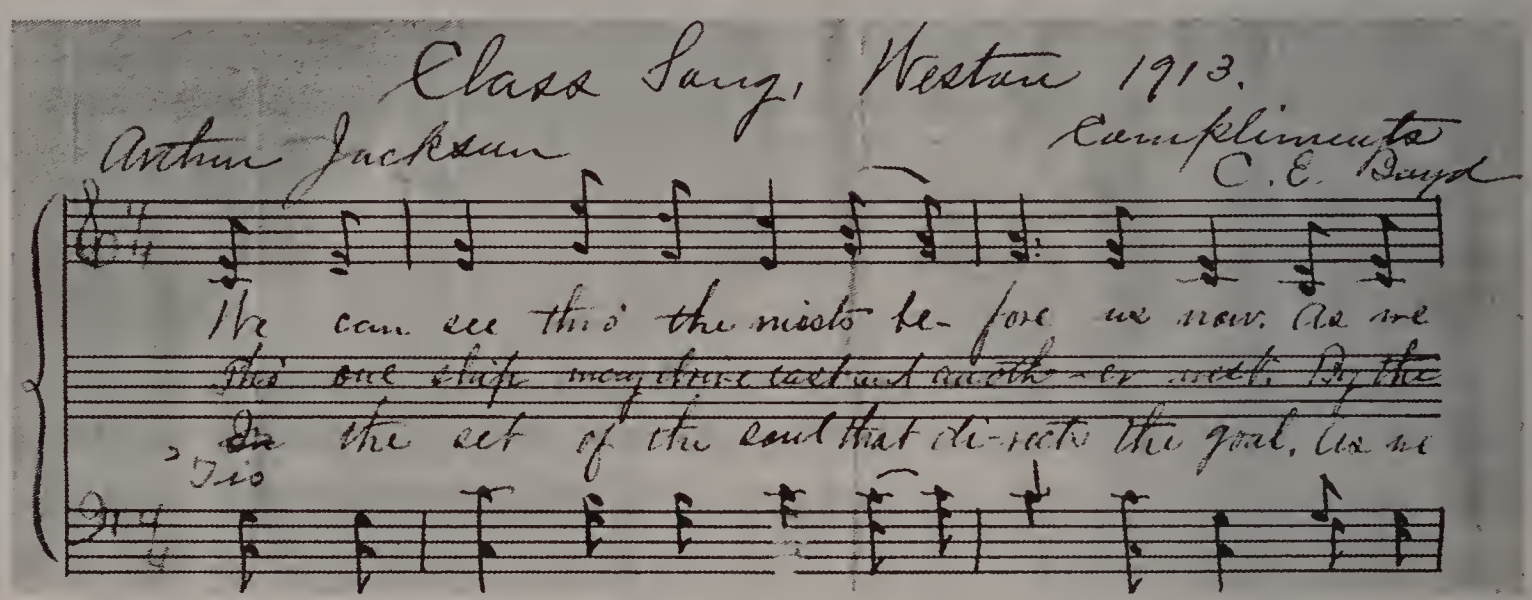
(above) Phyllis Amy Crommett in baby carriage, c.1924

(below) 663 Boston Post Road

Weston High School Books for Home Reading ENGLISH I (Choose Five)

Tom Brown at Oxford	Hughes
Monsieur Beaucaire	Tarkington
Red Rock	Page
Jane Eyre	Bronte
The Newcomes	Thackeray
Hugh Wynne	Mitchell
Pickwick Papers	Dickens
Life of Nelson	Southey

The Aeneid (Williams Translation) Vergil or any one of the American Statesman Series



Excerpt from a letter to Edith May West from MBI of Wellesley, October 20, 1913

"Dear Edie,

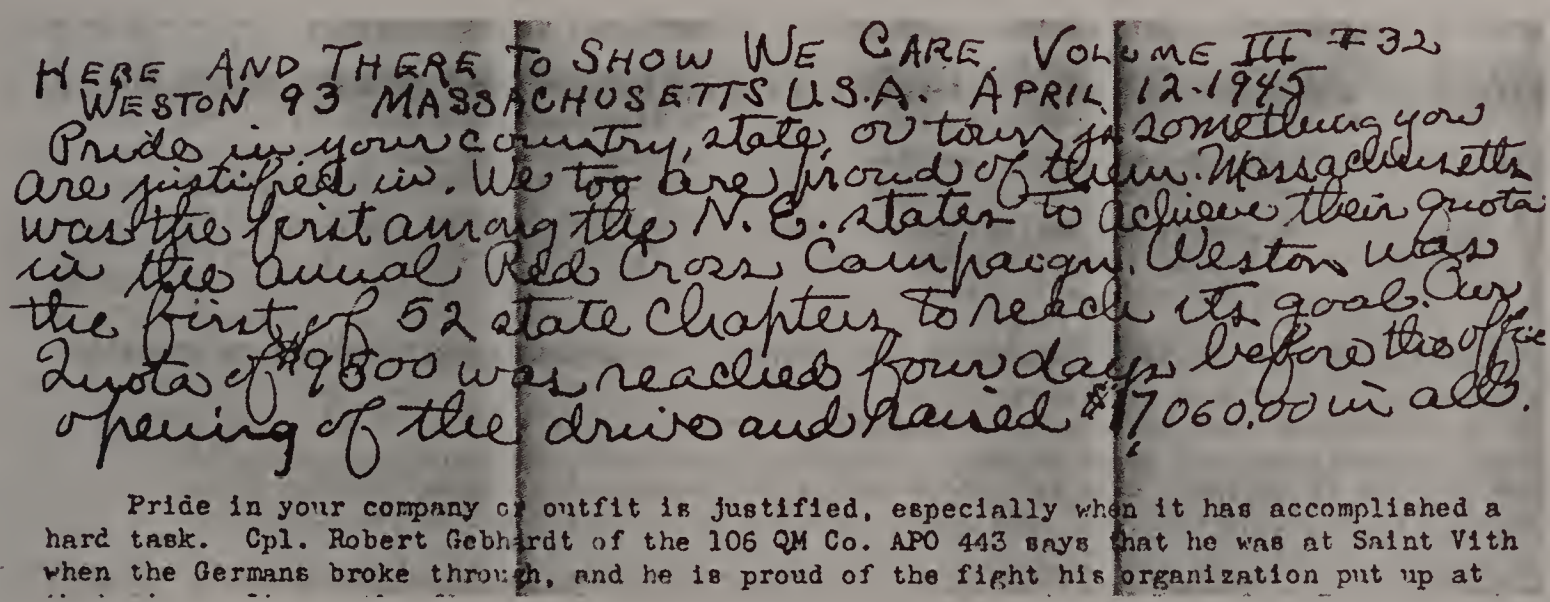
Did you ever in all your life see the heat of this weather? I'm sure I never have. What are you doing to keep out of mischief? I was going to be very, very nice yesterday and answer a stack of letters which I've owed for many days but — someone gave me a book and — you can easily guess how many letters were written by M.B. I. yesterday! The name of the book is "The Luck of Rathcoole." It was very good but I've read better ones. Elsie Smith called in the afternoon. She seems to be growing yet, and I think is much better looking than she used to be. She is having her teeth fixed and they make a great difference in her appearance. Good teeth are a blessing . . .I've been wearing my hair parted on the left side recently and have been told several times that it is very becoming! (Please don't think me vain) I like it that way myself for a change. The fire on the hearth is so cheery and bright these gray days and we shall miss it dreadfully when real cold weather comes and we shall have to put the stove up, for we should surely freeze with the open fire. Oh, you will receive McCall's magazine about the twentieth of November. ...My subscription ran out this month so when I renewed it I subscribed for you for the next year, too. You will recollect I promised it to you for a Christmas present, Miss West."

Edith's Story Continues: Phyllis Crommett Wheeler

Editor's note: In preparing the Bulletin, *I was looking at materials donated to the society by the estate of Phyllis Wheeler (1924-2005), a life-long resident of Weston. I came across a 1913 Weston High School graduation program with the name "Edith West" handwritten at the top, then a photo of a house on White Lane that was identical to one in Edith's scrapbook (see page 4 - 7 of this* Bulletin*) I suddenly realized that Phyllis Wheeler was the daughter of Edith May West.*

Phyllis Amy Crommett wrote her nickname, "Pete" next to her 1942 Weston High School yearbook picture (left). Also in the class was Allan Thorpe Wheeler Jr. The Class Prophecy correctly predicted that Phyllis and Allan would get married. But first, Allan went into the army, as did others in this wartime class. Included in Phyllis Wheeler's memorabilia are letters to Allan from Weston resident Austin Hale, who sent regular news-ladden mimeographed missives to all Weston men in uniform, Hale's letters always began with the phrase "Here and There to Show we Care." Soldiers wrote to Hale from all over the world and he passed on their news (see below)

Phyllis and Allan were married in October, 1946. He is listed on the marriage license as a mechanic and she as a retouch artist. In 1949, they built a small house at 655 Boston Post Road, where Phyllis lived until her death in 2005.



HERE AND THERE TO SHOW WE CARE VOLUME III #32
WESTON 93 MASSACHUSETTS U.S.A. APRIL 12-1945
Pride in your country, state, or town is something you are justified in. We too are proud of them. Massachusetts was the first among the N. E. states to achieve their quota in the annual Red Cross Campaign. Weston was the first of 52 state chapters to reach its goal. Our quota of $9500 was reached four days before the official opening of the drive and raised $17060.00 in all.

Pride in your company or outfit is justified, especially when it has accomplished a hard task. Cpl. Robert Gebhardt of the 106 QM Co. APO 443 says that he was at Saint Vith when the Germans broke through, and he is proud of the fight his organization put up at

Right: 1999 photo of 225 North Ave.

Below: 225, 227 and 231 North Avenue, c. 1900.

Organ Factory Cottage Destroyed in Explosion

On the morning of September 12, 2005, a massive natural gas explosion and fire destroyed the house at 225 North Avenue. Fortunately, the owners, Habib and Sandra Rahman, and their two daughters were not at home. The accident occurred after a septic contractor struck a gas line. Firemen and police called to the scene narrowly escaped serious injury. The Rahmans lost the house and all its contents. The historical society extends its best wishes to the Rahmans as they work to rebuild.

225 North Avenue was one of three North Avenue cottages built in 1893 by Francis Henry Hastings for workers at the Hook & Hastings organ factory, The factory, which moved from Boston to Weston in 1889, was located nearby in a massive wood frame building on Viles Street just north of the railroad tracks, Hastings was born in the Hastings Homestead at 199 North Avenue and built his own Shingle-style house at No. 190 in 1885. In addition to the three cottages on North Avenue, he built workers' housing on Lexington Street, Viles Street, and White Lane (now Brook Road) and also built Hastings Hall as a community center. His aim was to create a harmonious "community of labor" and a "neighborhood like a family."

Views of North Avenue at the Turn of the 20th Century

Editor's note: The mid-1890s photographs on the next three pages depict a short stretch of North Avenue between No. 260 and No. 306. The photographer has not been identified, but the quality of images and the way they are mounted suggests the work of a professional. The most likely candidate is William Franklin Tucker (1845-1907), son of Ebenezer and Martha Tucker of 306 North Avenue. W. Frank Tucker is listed in the 1893 Weston directory as both an organ finisher with Hook & Hastings and a photographer. At the time of his death he was listed as an organ decorator. His advertisement (below), which appears in the 1893 directory, gives his initials as F.W. but this seems to have been in error, as his listing in the same directory is as W.F. Tucker.

What is remarkable about these images is that they record the "ordinary" streetscape of North Avenue in the immediate vicinity of Tucker's family home, including houses which were then brand new Many of these images are part of the Lucy Boyd Collection donated to the Weston Historical Society by David and Bobbie Boyd Bradley. Information for some of the captions comes from Pam Fox's interview with long-time local resident Betty Rafuse in December, 1999.

F. W. TUCKER,

Photographer

The Photographs for the Illustrations in this book were taken by F. W. Tucker.

Residence, North Avenue,

Kendal Green, - - - Weston, Mass.

297 North Avenue (left). George N. Stevens, an organ factory employee, bought this lot from the Fiske family in 1890 and built a house that was destroyed by fire shortly thereafter. He then built the Queen Anne house shown in this photo and sold it in 1896.

306 North Avenue (top right) was built by Ebenezer Tucker in 1838 and is still standing. At some point the house was updated with Italianate double brackets. Tucker was a farmer and blacksmith and his shop (demolished in the early 20th century) can be seen to the left of the house. The shop also appears on the right side of the photo below. Ebenezer Tucker took his handmade tools to Boston and sold them to a seed company which became "Brecks." Tucker's daughter, Mary Elizabeth (Mary Lizzie) married Henry Goddard Russell (see 272 North Avenue, next page) Their daughter, Ethelyn, married Wm. E. Otto, and their daughter, Betty, married Leander Rafuse.

277 North Avenue, visible on the left side of the photo above, was built by George W. Garfield (Sr.) in 1821 and is still standing. The photographer took the photo from a vantage point between the Tucker house and blacksmith shop at 306 North Avenue.

269 North Avenue (left) was probably built about 1860 by Hiram Garfield, son of George W. Garfield (Sr). In 1887, he sold the house to Hiram Bennett, a house painter who built the wing to house his wife's maiden aunt.

272 North Avenue (top right) was built in 1843-44 and altered in the Gothic Revival mode. The location of the original photo is unknown, and this reproduction is from a xerox copy. No. 272 was built by wheelwright George W. Garfield Jr. A later owner, Henry G. Russell, was from New Hampshire, where he made barrels and brought them by horse and wagon to Boston. According to his granddaughter Betty Rafuse, he met his future wife, Mary Lizzie Tucker, on route and came back to marry her. Russell is listed in directories as a farmer. The windmill was used to pump water for the house until town water came to North Avenue in 1922. Behind the barn was a cow yard and bridge across Stoney Brook to fields beyond.

266 North Avenue (lower right) was built in 1891 by organ factory employee Frank Gowell and owned at the turn of the century by Albert Brown, who also worked at the factory. The open piazza was later enclosed. The house is still standing. At right you can see part of the windmill and barn owned by Henry Russell (see above).

The two double houses at 126 and 130 Viles Street (left) were built in 1887 to house organ factory workers. The third house from the right, since demolished, was an existing tenement with four apartments. Hastings Hall is at left. (Photo c. 1892)

263 North Avenue (top left) was probably built in stages beginning about 1875. Owner Samuel Patch Jr. had both a barn and a shop. The shop still remains behind the house.

263 North Avenue (lower left) from another angle, looking northwest. At left is No. 272.

Recent Donations to the Weston Historical Society

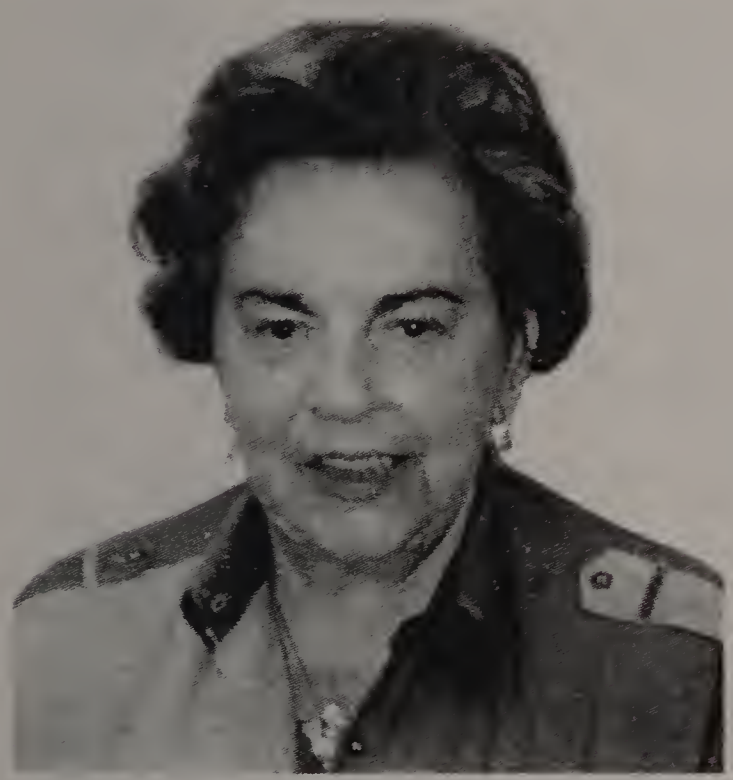
From the estate of Phyllis Wheeler, photos and memorabilia (see article on page 9)
From Mrs. Marie J. Valle, 1934 photographs of the H.L. Stone Dairy in Waltham. (Milk from Weston farmers on the north side was picked up and processed by Stone Dairy.)
From Joan Patriquin, contribution in memory of Calvin Patriquin
From John Sallay, three scrapbooks of Edith May West (see article on page 4)
From Vera Laska, bequest of money, videotapes from Weston 2000, and other items
From Ivy and Roy Carlson, photocopy of the E.T. Ryan Inc. Catalogue (undated)
From William Gallagher III, contribution toward purchase of Francis B. Sears Jr. papers
Other acquisitions:

- Bills and receipts from the estate of Francis B. Sears, Jr., 1906 to 1920s
- Milk bottle from Ferndale Farm Dairy
- Drabbington Lodge golf tournament prize plate, 1912
- 1973 Town of Weston Dog Tag

In Memoriam: Vera Laska (1923 – 2005)

Vera Laska, long-time Weston Historical Society board member and Bulletin *editor, died on December 11, 2005, after a long illness. In 2004, author William Martin, WHS board member and past president, delivered the following tribute in her honor at the society's annual meeting.*

"It is often said that Americans who are born here never quite appreciate their history or their freedom as fully as those who adopt this country as their own. Well, nobody embodies that truth more fully than Vera Laska. While most of us, to use her words, came to citizenship through happy coincidence, she made a conscious decision to become an American.



"As a young woman, she knew better than most what freedom meant. She fought for it in the Czech Resistance during World War II. And she can still describe, in vivid detail, the day that she stood on a train platform, looked to her left and looked to her right, and saw the black leather coats of the SS moving toward her from both directions. Fifty years later, the thought of them still makes her angry. She spent the rest of the war in a German concentration camp.

"But then, in 1946, she came to America. She came to study American history —she wanted me to emphasize that — and she earned her PhD. at the University of Chicago. She reminded me, a Harvard graduate, that Harvard is really the University of Chicago of the east. In 1966, she and her husband, Andy, settled in town and raised two sons here. She became a professor of history at Regis College, enlightening her students on both national history and the history of Weston. She has since written some 350 articles, including her wonderful series on local history in the *Town Crier*. She has also written books on the life of Ben Franklin and the lives of the Founding Mothers and edited the acclaimed *Women in the Resistance and in the Holocaust: The Voices of Eyewitnesses*. She has taught under Fulbright and George Washington Fellowships. And of course, she has been one of the pillars of our historical society.

"I asked her what she would like me to say about her this evening and she said, "Tell them that I loved Weston, and I hope that Weston loved me."

Message from the Editor:
This issue of the BULLETIN focuses on the neighborhood around the Hook & Hastings organ factory, which was located at Viles Street and North Avenue from 1889 to the mid-1930s. It is the first BULLETIN to be done with a word processing/ publishing program, iPages, and represents an experiment, possibly the first of several, to see how well photographs will scan and print using new technology and equipment. Please contact me if you would like to write an article or memoir, or if you have photographs and memorabilia that you would like to share with other readers. All such materials will be returned.

Please remember the Society when you are looking for a home for your Weston-related photographs, memorabilia, Weston High School yearbooks, theater and concert programs, decorative objects, items related to town institutions and events, and anything else that will give future generations a picture of what life was like in our town.

We would like to thank all those who renewed their membership last fall. If you have not yet paid membership dues for 2005-06, we hope you will do so now.

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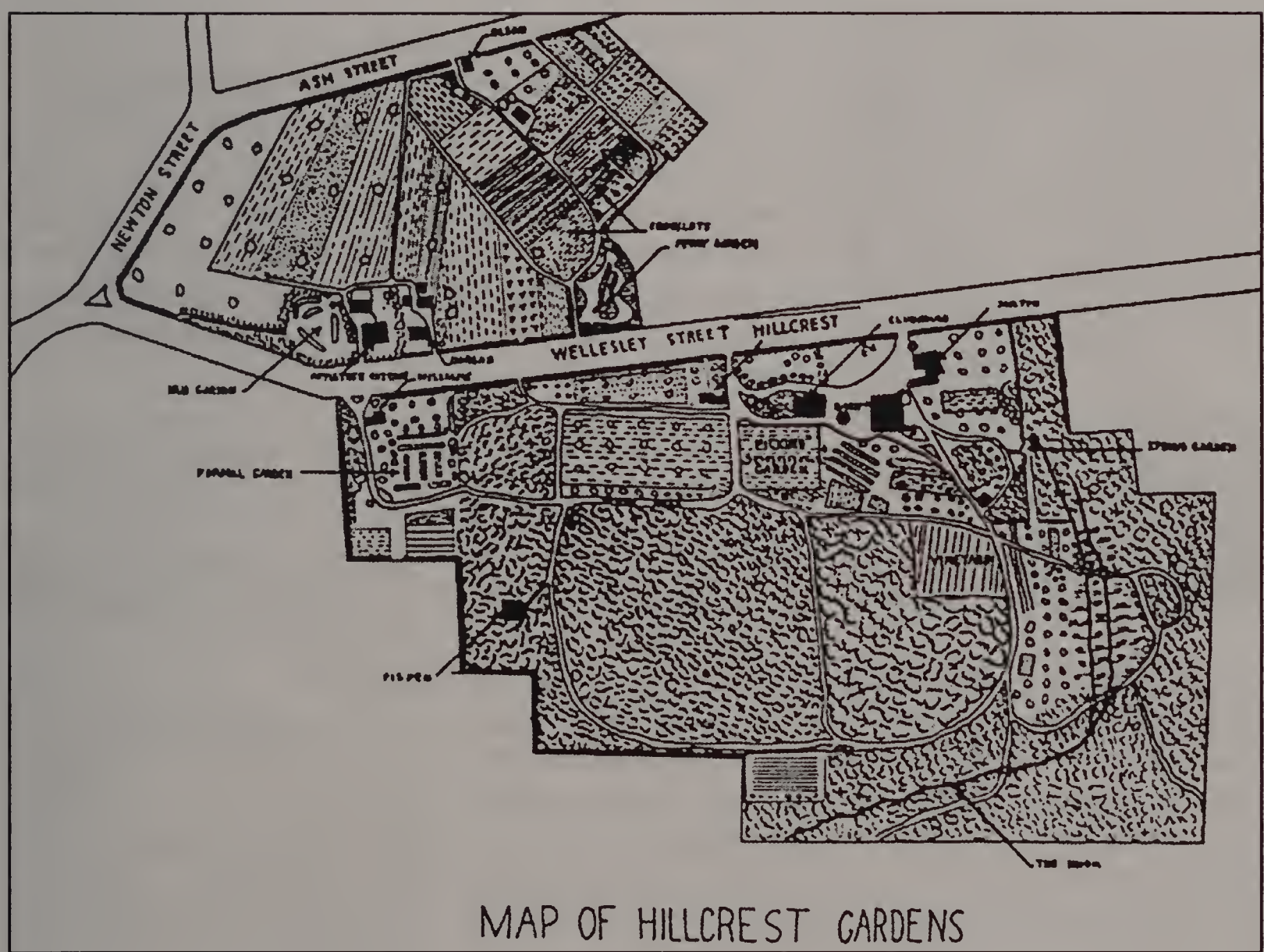
Membership dues: Individuals $15, family $15, life membership $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston MA 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained for $5 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Vol. No. XXXVII Fall, 2006

Special Case Estates Issue



This map from Marian Case's 1938 Green Book shows land use at the peak of her Hillcrest operations. The following features between Wellesley and Ash Streets are labeled: Olson (house), Crosslots, peony garden, iris garden, Appletree Cottage, Dorgan (house). Across the street: Williams (house), clubhouse, barn, Milton (house), picking garden, formal garden, spring garden, vineyard, pig pen, Wood Road, and brook. The Dorgan house was later demolished.

Editor's Note: The May and October, 1982, issues of *The Weston Historical Society Bulletin* were devoted to the Case Family in Weston and Marian Roby Case's Hillcrest Farm (later renamed Hillcrest Gardens). This issue includes a Case time line and excerpts from the "Green Books" that Miss Case compiled and printed each year from 1911 to 1943. Named for their green covers, these 5.5" X 7" volumes chronicle the history of Hillcrest, which Marian Case established as model farm, regional horticultural center, and summer agricultural work-study program for boys. The first Green Book was just 10 pages long. The most extensive, in 1919, numbered 90 pages. Some of the later volumes include a group photograph or cover design by one of the boys.

To demonstrate the quality of the academic work done by the boys during the daily study hour, Miss Case edited and printed many of their required Labor Day reports. Popular topics included farming methods, vegetables, fruits, flowers, insects, birds, weather, and Hillcrest history and traditions. The Green Books also provided a forum for Marian Case to communicate her idealistic goals for the farm and to recognize the effort and accomplishments of the boys. In a strikingly candid and forthright manner, she expressed her frustrations, lamented her failures, and pointed with pride as Hillcrest achieved wider recognition and her boys developed into "true and trusted citizens" with a deep love of Nature.

Marion Roby Case (1864-1944)

Marian Roby Case was the youngest of four daughters of James Brown Case, one of the first Boston businessmen to summer in Weston. Her mother, Laura Williams, was the daughter of a wealthy and prominent Boston family. In the winter, the family returned to their townhouse at 468 Beacon Street or traveled.

The four Case sisters spent childhood summers in Weston. In 1883, 25-year-old Mabel was killed in a carriage accident. Only the oldest, Caroline, ever married. The death of James Case in 1907 brought major changes. The family sold the house in Boston and Louisa lived with her mother in Weston. In 1912 Louisa purchased a cottage across the street at 80 Wellesley Street. After the death of her mother in 1918, Louisa inherited the Case family mansion and continued to live in the style of her parents. She was remembered as a "perfect lady in all respects." Marian, on the other hand, was neither ladylike nor conventional. She has been described as "sort of the odd stick in the family" but also "exceedingly kind and helpful to others." She had a pronounced lisp. After her father's death, Marian, then age 45, embarked on a career combining farming and education, calling herself a "farmerette."

Above and left: Portraits of Marian Roby Case. (undated)

The Case Family: A Time Line

Rocklawn, summer home of James B. Case, now Case House, 89 Wellesley Street

1863 Dry goods merchant and banker James Brown Case and his wife Laura Williams Case buy land in Weston from Charles White, whose wife was the aunt of Laura Case.

1889 The family's new Shingle-style mansion is constructed from designs by architect Ernest Boyden.

1907 Death of James Brown Case.

1909 Marian Roby Case purchases a farm adjacent to her family summer estate. On the property is a Greek Revival farmhouse built about 1843 by Nathan Barker (101 Wellesley Street). She calls the house The Sentinels. She also purchases a farm from the Hastings family with a vernacular farmhouse built about 1790 by Thomas Rand Jr. (131 Wellesley Street). She establishes Hillcrest Farm. The Green Books give the total acreage as 23+ acres at this point. Her two farm hands, Alfonso Gallini and Thomas Park, begin work plowing and breaking up the ground. In an existing orchard, a contractor is hired to drag rocks away on a stone drag. Aging apple trees are pruned of dead wood and rotted cavities dug out and filled with cement.

1910 Marian Case purchases the Queen Anne house at 102 Wellesley Street, built in 1897 by Howard L. Cooper. She nicknames it Appletree Cottage and uses it as her own residence. She buys the partially-constructed Mulock house, moves it across the street, and outfits it as a clubhouse. The original cellar between Wellesley and Ash Streets is later used for storage of apples and roots.

This was the first summer of cultivation, sometimes considered the first "official" summer at Hillcrest. New farm tools, cultivators, and plows arrive. The first six "Hillcrest Boys" work through Labor Day. The chief product of the season is wild blueberries. Miss Case buys two Percherion draught horses, each weighing about 1200 pounds. They are named Pluck and Win, suggesting a motto for success. The first means for delivering vegetables is the "bicycle express," consisting of a box strapped on the handle bars of a bicycle. The farm receives an order and it is picked and delivered by one of the boys.

1911 The first "Green Book" is printed, entitled *The Second Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston*. Ten Hillcrest boys work through Labor Day. The basic elements of the Hillcrest program are in place, including the khaki uniform and pin, lecture series by specialists,

inspirational poetry readings, special outings, and the Labor Day picnic and presentation of papers by the boys. A wagon replaces the bicycle express. Some land in the lower "cross lots" between Wellesley and Ash Streets is opened and planted, mostly with cabbage and tomatoes.

Appletree Cottage, 102 Wellesley Street, home of Marian Case from the early 1910s until her death in 1944.

Winter of 1911-1912 Pluck dies and is replaced by Nancy Try, "so now the horse motto is Try and Win. Though we have lost Pluck we must Try and Win." (1913 Green Book, p. 19)

1912 Marian Case purchases a 45.5-acre property with a Greek Revival house built about 1847 by farmer Otis Train (137 Wellesley Street). The owner, Boston merchant George B. Milton, retains life tenancy. The number of Hillcrest boys reaches 18.

Winter of 1912-13 The "hens tooth" wall is built from the clubhouse to The Sentinels at 101 Wellesley Street. The 10-foot wall later referred to as "Louisa's Wall" is built behind The Sentinels. With the Milton land, Hillcrest now encompasses 70 acres. Part of the Milton land as well as land in the cross lots formerly used by the boys for baseball games, is plowed, to be planted with potatoes.

1913 The Skinner System of irrigation is installed. The Hillcrest fife and drum corps marches in the town's Bicentennial celebration. A new Ford delivery truck is purchased, and also a power sprayer.

1913-14 The classroom period develops, better known as the "study hour." Labor Day exercises take on the form that continued throughout the Hillcrest years, consisting of a procession with the boys singing "America," the oath of allegiance to the flag, reading of the boys' reports, and singing of the Hillcrest Song, written by Philip Coburn.

1916 A vineyard is laid out on the Milton grounds. Hillcrest enters the town's Fourth of July parade, winning many prizes. Their float represents Peace and Agriculture. The boys receive lessons in "vocal calisthenics" every Friday afternoon.

1917 Marian Case participates in wartime efforts to deal with food shortages. She purchases five acres between Wellesley and Ash Streets called Crosslots from the Hastings family. Hillcrest has 25 acres under cultivation, twice as much as in 1915. Miss Case

buys a carload of canning jars, which are sold at cost to townspeople. The boys learn to can fruits and vegetables in the kitchen at The Sentinels. Hillcrest sponsors a Red Cross Sale netting $454.63. The boys canvas the town for donations to fund a tablet placed on the lawn of the town library, with names of men in the armed services. A new rose garden is started, in addition to the existing rose and flower garden.

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1918 Laura Williams Case dies, leaving the 113-acre Rocklawn estate to her three surviving daughters. When Caroline dies in 1919, her share is divided between Louisa and Marian. Marian deeds some of her share to Louisa but keeps two parcels, approximately two acres with the stucco cow barn on the south side of Alphabet Lane and nine acres at ["the nose"] between Wellesley and Ash Streets. A new orchard of quinces, peaches, plums and pears is planted on the Milton land. A donkey, formerly the mascot of a regiment, is adopted by Hillcrest after the regiment leaves for war.

1920 Hillcrest Farm is renamed Hillcrest Gardens, reflecting a wider interest in horticulture and gardening. A Fordson tractor is purchased.

1921 A stone incinerator is constructed to burn brush, producing potash used in making fertilizer. Hillcrest Market is established in Weston Center to sell produce from the farm. Marian Case is made a trustee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, only the second woman elected to the board.

Plan of Estate of James B. Case, August 1919. This redrawn map shows the land inherited by Louisa and Marian Case after the death of their mother in 1918 and sister Caroline in 1919.

1923 Eight boys board at Hillcrest, reflecting Miss Case's efforts to bring in promising boys from outside the area. Test gardens are started for iris, peonies, and larkspurs.

1924 A new custom begins, that of inviting a former Hillcrest boy to give a talk on his experiences since leaving.

1925 John C. Wister plants the peony garden in the former potato patch. Marian Case is awarded the large Gold Medal of the Massachusetts Horti-

cultural Society in recognition of her educational work at Hillcrest Gardens.

1927 Construction on the yellow brick barn begins in April and is completed by Labor Day. The architect is Samuel Mead and the builder is William Kellar. The iris garden opposite Appletree Cottage is laid out by John C. Wister, a noted horticulturist from Philadelphia. Marian Case serves a short term as president of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association and hosts a luncheon for 200 members in the new barn that fall.

1928 Marian Case makes her last land purchase, of pine woods and swampland south of the Milton land needed to screen Hillcrest from Chestnut Street. A rock garden is started next to the clubhouse.

About 1937 Hillcrest Market closes. Produce from the farm is sold at the Weston Quality Market in the town center.

1938 The hurricane on September 21 causes extensive damage. The Green Book lists the following numbers of trees lost: approximately 3000 pines, 500 oaks, 250 maples, 74 apple trees, 15 peach trees, 8 quinces, 6 plum trees, and ornamental trees and shrubs including three Chinese Elms said to be among the oldest in the country,

1937 photograph of the Hillcrest boys, with Marian Case (center) and Tom Park on her right. By that time the Norfolk jacket originally part of the uniform had been changed to a green sweater.

1939 Many former Hillcrest boys attend the 30th anniversary celebration.

Late 1930s Louisa Case donates one acre of land to the Weston Scouts for a meeting house and the adjacent two acres to the town as a permanent park.

1942 Louisa Case gives the family mansion and 58.73 acres to Harvard University for the use of the Arnold Arboretum.

1943 The 34th and last summer at Hillcrest Gardens.

1944 Death of Marian Case. In her will, she leaves Hillcrest Gardens, a total of 102 acres, to the Arnold Arboretum. The Arboretum gradually develops the former Hillcrest land and the former James Case land given by Louisa into a regional center for plant propagation and experimentation called the Case Estates.

1946 Death of Louisa Case. Just prior to her death, she prevails upon Harvard to sell 43 acres of the original James Case land to the town for school use. The sale includes the Case mansion, a large barn and greenhouses, and land that is now the site of Field School and Country School. The sale price is $10,000.

1947 The James Case barn behind the mansion burns to the ground. Insurance proceeds of $15,000 more than pays for the 1946 land acquisition.

1957 The Town of Weston takes 31.5 additional acres by eminent domain for construction of Woodland School.

1985 The 35.65 acre field (often referred to as the 40-acre field) is purchased by the Town of Weston. This land is now leased by Land's Sake, which operates a community farm and educational program with goals similar to those of Marian Roby Case.

1991 Arboretum Director Robert Cook determines that the Case Estates is no longer central to the mission of the Arboretum. Over the next 15 years, most of the houses are subdivided off and sold to private owners. Plant material is transfered to the Jamaica Plain facility or removed to make the property easier to maintain. Classes and other programs are gradually discontinued.

2006 Town of Weston votes on whether to purchase the remaining 62.5 acres of the Case Estates from the Arboretum for $22.5 million.

Excerpts from the Green Books

The Second Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston, Mass. by Marian Roby Case, September 1911.

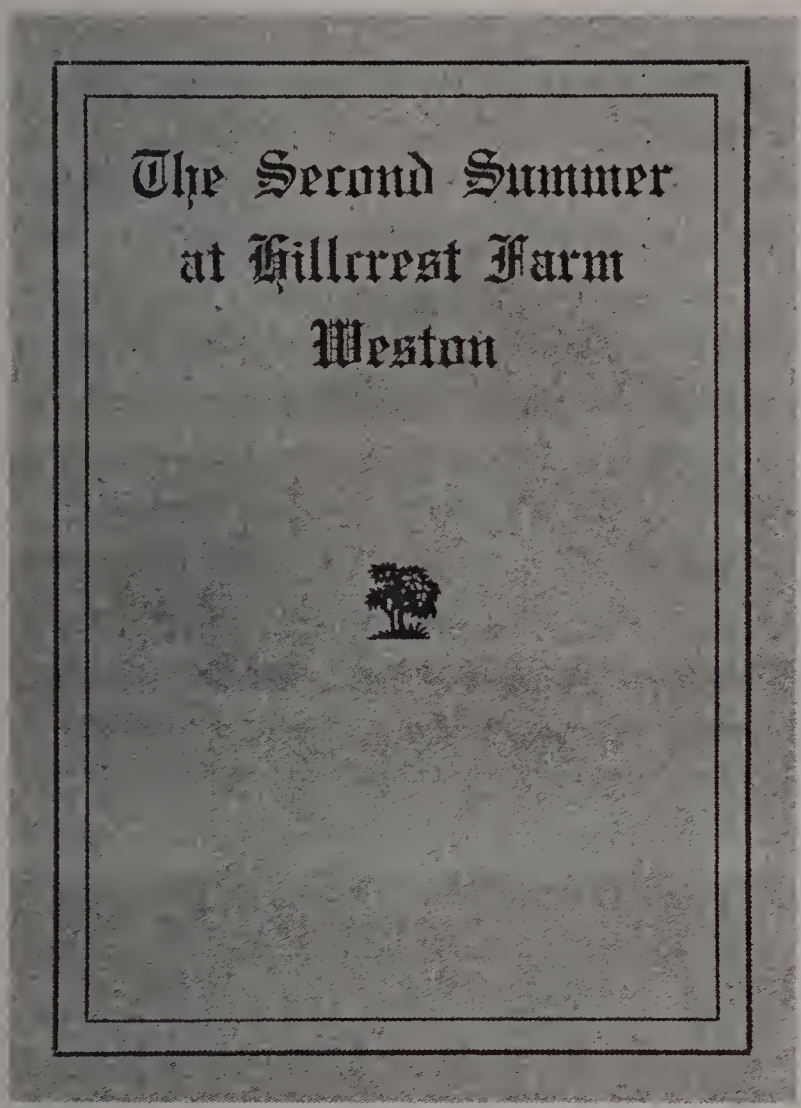
"The land was bought in the spring of 1909, but the first summer was spent in taking stones out of the ground, a crop with which the town of Weston is rich and the stones are proving of value in various ways, but I did not want them in my orchard. The summer of 1910 I had incompetent foremen and little was accomplished. The third summer, or second summer of cultivating the ground at Hillcrest I was fortunate in having an excellent Scotch gardener who had had ample experience in the old country. . . . Next summer when we have more fruit and berries and our grapes are in better condition we feel confident that the farm will become self-supporting. This year we have depended on the sale of vegetables for which we have a good local market. There is also an old apple orchard the renovation of which would be another story, but the sale of Williams apples helped us out through August. Peach trees which had been planted on the otherwise neglected place are now yielding delicious fruit.

"Hillcrest is an experimental farm where we wish to work up the scientific side of agriculture as well as to employ the boys of the town through their long summer vacation. In order that we may keep in touch with the best work that is being done in agriculture, and also interest the boys in nature, we have had lectures through the summer by specialists; on butterflies, on bees . . . on apples. . . on grapes . . . and on birds. . . . These lectures were given in a little club house on the farm which has two large rooms, the upper one being furnished with folding chairs, a stereopticon curtain—the reflectoscope we have not yet bought but have hired a lantern as we needed it through the summer. We have also in this room or hall a platform, a blackboard and the bird charts.

"During the summer I asked the different boys to my studio and there took their photographs with my six and a half-inch Century camera, so that each boy has his portrait hanging in the hall, and a good looking set of boys they are. The taking of these photographs also shows how the boys develop. One boy in coming to my studio this year to have his picture taken asked me if I thought he had grown since last summer. I was able to tell him that I thought he had grown in everything that makes a boy worth while. The photographs taken of him this year and last show this improvement and I proudly claim that they indicate what the work at Hillcrest Farm can do for a boy.

"We ask to our lectures not only the boys and their parents but many friends from our own and neighboring towns. We have had many hot and some rainy Monday afternoons, yet the lectures have been well attended.

"When the boys first came to the farm this summer the military spirit was rife among them. In July the trees of our town were so badly infested with browntail moths and gypsy caterpillars that I felt that some extra measure must be taken to save them. I first applied to our tree warden who felt that all that was possible was already being done



Cover of the 1911 Green Book, first in a series of 33 such publications compiled and printed by Marian Case, describing the work at Hillcrest.

in the town. I then went to one of our selectmen who felt it doubtful if further work could be done, but advised my writing to our state forester, Mr. F.W. Rane. Mr. Rane came out one of the hottest of our July days and found the boys picking blueberries. He showed them the soldier bug, an enemy of the gypsy caterpillar, a parasite that had lain an egg in a worm, and others ill with the Wiltz disease. The boys told him of how they had been picking the caterpillars off the trees into cans half full of kerosene and of how on the ploughed land they had lighted the oil in the open cans and burned up the worms. For the boys are being taught that true patriotism is in civil rather than in military service. Or as one of the youngest of our boys wrote:

'We must fight the battle
Vegetation
Fight the battle
For our nation.'

"A description of this summer would be inadequate without mention of a young Chinaman, Mr. Woon Young Chun, who came to take charge of the boys in July. He is studying at the Agricultural College in Amherst that he may take the knowledge of our methods of agriculture back to his own land.

"The eight boys who worked on the farm last year returned in the spring. Two of them later dropped out; one through lack of interest in the work, the other went to another farm where he could get higher wages. His brother remained with us, saying, 'I could earn more by working on my uncle's farm, but I would rather be at Hillcrest, I just love it.' I pay the boys a dollar a week for the first two years of training when they work from eight to twelve in the morning. The third year they have the privilege of working all day for twenty dollars a month. They are given two khaki uniforms, shirts, a tie, and the Hillcrest hat. Their Norfolk jackets have the monogram H-C for Hillcrest embroidered in black on their left sleeves. The afternoon they had their suits given to them Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior" was read that the boys might realize that they were getting into uniforms for better fights with life.

"Twelve is the age at which the boys are meant to be admitted, but some younger ones came this year. Other small brothers are eagerly waiting. Boys need amusement as well as work, so they went with me to see Buffalo Bill on his final appearance in Boston, have had a picnic at Lake Walden, and field sports of running and jumping the Saturday afternoon before Labor Day.

Labor Day is the wind up of the boys' work on the farm as they have to return to school. In the lower room of the club house they had a picnic to which each boy asked a girl. In the afternoon the parents and friends came to hear the papers which the boys had written on some matter relating to their work on the farm." (Marian Case, p 3-7)

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"In our selection of a subject for an essay this year we were allowed a great deal of latitude. As I understand it we were permitted to reach into the vast store-house of nature that we have been living in all summer and select a subject from any of the great branches of nature or departments of living and growing things.

"The first thought that came to me as I cast about me for a subject was the realization of how small a space even a human being occupies in this wonderfully complete moving picture of growing and living things that the Creator has placed each of us in. The first feeling was one of deep responsibility and humility that I should be allowed to act even in a small way as a steward to help care for my part of God's creation, all of which is so fearfully and wonderfully made." (PEARS, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., age 13, p. 8)

The Third Summer at Hillcrest Farm by THE BOYS for The Boys, June 18-September 2, 1912.

"My subject is "The Reason Why." I chose this subject because I thought it suitable for the occasion. The younger boys perhaps wonder why Miss Case is going to expense and trouble to have us work up here. Is it because she needs our labor? No, it is because she wants us to make something of ourselves and to benefit us; therefore we should be interested in our work and try to do all that is expected of us. It will be a pleasant memory for us to look back upon our Hillcrest days as a starting point. Why not grasp eagerly the opportunity which is now before us, as other boys have done. Many boys in the South would willingly jump at such a chance but it is not afforded them. Boys much nearer to us than those in the South have been

Harold R. Weaver was the son of Marian Case's butler. In the winter he attended the State Normal School in Elizabeth City, North Carolina "in order that he may partly grow up among his own people, and so know better how to help them." (quote from Marian Case, The Third Summer, *p. 4)*

asking for a chance to earn some money in this way. I refer to those boys who came from Waltham asking for work up here. I saw how eager they were to obtain work of any kind and when they were told that only Weston boys were hired, they went off disappointed. [Editor's note: In subsequent years, many of the boys came from Waltham. Miss Case also began taking boys from other parts of the country, as boarders]. This happened only a few days ago. This should make us appreciate what is being done for us, and we should show Miss Case our feeling by cheerfully doing our duty. Who else is doing for boys in Weston what Miss Case is doing? I answer no one, then why should not we help her, by not causing her to worry, by doing our duty to the best of our ability and by not asking for unjust things. Let us honor and appreciate our Hillcrest Farm. We have a fine clubhouse here with literature, etc.

Another question is, why does Miss Case have men to lecture to us,—to show us different things? It is because she wants us to have a through knowledge of insects, plants, trees and the like, so that we may know them on sight, and be able to tell about them. We learn to work at Hillcrest. You may say that is easy enough, but at Hillcrest we learn to work scientifically. Thus I have tried to explain why we are up here at Hillcrest.

"Without halting, without rest,
Lifting better up to best."

"Remember comrades,—'Semper Paratus,'and that is the reason why Miss Case has us up here." (THE REASON WHY, Harold R. Weaver, age 14, p. 4-6).

* * *

"The motto of the farm 'Semper Paratus' came from my writing to Harold before he returned from North Carolina that the boys watchword on the farm was to be 'Ready.' That they were to be ready for anything they were called upon to do. At one of their first meetings in the spring Harold asked that this motto be put into Latin. Mr. Pettey, who had charge of the boys, said that the best translation for it would be 'Semper Paratus,' always prepared. As an illustration of what was meant by this motto the boys had given them a plaster cast of the Minute Man at Concord. Who, out in the field with his plough, is yet ready with his coat and musket to go into service at a moment's call from his country. Yet the boys are taught that better help can be given to a nation with a plough than with a musket. . . .

"On Labor Day the boys were given a flag of dark green and yellow silk, the Hillcrest colors. It was designed by one of them and bears their motto in gold letters. On Friday afternoons through the winter they have met in the clubhouse to practice in a drum corps with the hope of being able to play well enough to lead the school procession on Memorial Day. " (Marian Case, p. 6)

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"They say that every form of plant was made for a purpose and has a value in itself if we could only know how to apply it, but we found it necessary to wage a continuous warfare on the large array of vegetation known as weeds." (A DIARY OF THE THIRD YEAR AT HILLCREST, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 15)

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"The chief reason why most every farmer has currants and gooseberries is because they are most reliable. They are not so important as other fruits but we would miss our jellies, jams and sauces if we cast them aside. They have the good habit of giving us a crop every year. The peaches may be winter killed, the apples may be wormy, the pears may be blighted, the birds may get the cherries. but we are always sure of the currant and gooseberry crop. They are the hardiest of our common fruits. These two small fruits take up less space in proportion to the amount of fruit produced than most others. They are very easily grown. These three points show you why we have in number one hundred and twenty currant bushes and sixty-four gooseberries at Hillcrest. . . ." (CURRANTS AND GOOSEBERRIES, John Cain, p.17-18)

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The Fourth Summer at Hillcrest Farm Weston, by The Boys for The Boys, 1913

"John's paper [on work done in the winter of 1912-13] has reported much of interest. The large stones or bowlders (sic) he mentions as making the wall were dug from Hillcrest Farm and neighboring land which was being cleared from rocks. As John says the single stones stand three or four feet high and show many beautiful colors.

"The high wall back of The Sentinels was built for the protection of fruit trees, especially peaches. These are to be the fan-shaped trees trained on three rows of copper wire which is run through lead pipes. We are importing these

The "hens' tooth" or "balancing wall" was constructed in the winter of 1912-13.

According to Marian Case's account in The Fourth Summer, *the wall behind 101 Wellesley Street was built for the protection of fruit trees. The wall is ten feet high, six feet thick and 200 feet long and has been called "the largest free-standing dry wall in New England," although this statement would be hard to prove definitively. An account in the 1998* Harvard Magazine *says that the wall was a present from Louisa to Marian and refers to it as "Louisa's wall. "*

trees from Thomas Rivers & Son, Sawbridgeworth Herts, England, as we can import the trained trees at less expense than to buy them from the American nurseries. The firm assures us that they can supply us with trees which will prove hardy in our climate.

" . . . We use the town water on the farm through the Skinner system of irrigation. It carries the water in adjustable pipes eight or ten feet above the ground so that it descends like rain. It was good for the vegetables, but a doubtful benefit to the fruit trees between the rows of which the vegetables were planted, as it tended to keep the roots of the young trees too near the surface. But it is an adjustable system of pipes which with slight expense can be moved to another lot of land. In the autumn the pipes crossing the land were all taken down and housed for the winter." (Marian Case, p. 4-5)

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"After Labor Day the drums were dropped for awhile. We all thought that if we could have a few fifes the band would sound better. In November Mr. Weaver told us that Miss Case had bought six snare drums, one bass drum, and eight fifes and a pair of cymbals. Practise (sic) was carried on every Friday afternoon. By Memorial Day we had learned about six tunes. We did not parade Memorial Day because of illness in Miss Case's family. Our next appearance was in the pageant when Weston celebrated the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of her incorporation as a town. We had to learn Yankee Doodle for the pageant. The day after the pageant we marched in the big parade and that was our last appearance as we went to work next day." (THE DRUM CORPS, Edward A. Tulis, p. 6)

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The Hillcrest fife and drum corps marched in the town's 250th anniversary parade in 1913.

"Tennyson says in his poem of Locksley Hall: 'In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove; In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.'

"But with us farmers our spring thoughts at present turn to our planting. Hardly has the holiday season passed when with each mail comes the alluring high colored spring seed catalogues. Then we turn their wonderful pages to see what new things Mr. Breck, Mr. Farquhar and other equally good seedsmen have found to catch our eyes. This being my fourth year on the farm and my third year as commercial traveler for Hillcrest, I was asked to go through the catalogues with Mr. Hawkins. . . we looked over and discussed the different vegetables and finally decided on certain ones which would probably be the most desirable for commercial purposes. I had grown to know through my dealings with the customers what kinds suited them best. For instance one customer would want golden bantam, another Stowell's evergreen corn. For another customer we planted a pea called the Champion of England, as her preference was for that especial kind. In fact we have tried in every way to cater to our customers.

"In the meantime lettuce, cabbages, radishes, tomatoes, etc., had all been started in hot beds in anticipation of our summer opening. I received my summons to appear on the team the third of May for the first time. Much to my surprise I was allowed to drive Win, our old dapple gray standby of the year before without the aid of Mr. Cain or our friend Tom.

"Ted and I got up on the boy (sic). Our load consisted of wallflowers (sic) and lupins which were readily disposed of and we got orders for more. We were a little longer on the trip as we found most of our customers socially inclined. On the whole we were satisfied with our first appearance. Besides the plants we had apples, lettuce and rhubarb. For two or three more times we went around in May but found that we could not supply the demand.

"We had to give up the route for awhile owing to scarcity of vegetables, but it was only for a short time as on the eighteenth of June business began in good earnest. Tom [Park] and I started out in bright array very proud to deliver our goods in an auto truck for during the winter our friend Tom had been receiving training on the mechanism and driving of an automobile and came out with a full-fledged chauffeur's license. Even pride has a fall and while we started out our first day with flying colors we met with an accident to the truck and had to fall back on our old standby Win. Never to be defeated, we kept on. It was not long before we had the truck again and have never stopped since even for a day.

"We did not confine our sales to Auburndale and Weston but when we had too plentiful a supply of vegetables a load was sent into Hall and Cole's at Faneuil Hall Market. So if by chance you are in there and see some especially fresh vegetables you will know they came from Hillcrest. The truck started on these occasions at half past five and was home at half past seven. This was done in much less time than a horse could have done it.

"As soon as the peaches, tomatoes, potatoes and corn were ripe the daily sales increased thirty per cent. The peaches were beautiful to look at and luscious to eat. The tomatoes were some of the best I have seen and were almost perfect in shape. The potatoes were not hard to sell because everybody needs them, and the corn spoke for itself. . .

"In closing I think we should thank Miss Case for the patience and kindly interest she has shown in each boy. I have often thought when I have seen men and boys coming from shops how thankful we are to be in the open, enjoying the sunlight and fresh air of the country." (A LETTER FROM OUR SALESMAN, Philip Coburn, age 14, p. 7)

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"In five years this farm has improved wonderfully, almost too rapidly some think. But even with these marked signs of advancement there is still room for more. Miss Case has said that we want to make this the most perfect farm in New England, to grow the best quality of fruit, to inspire New Englanders to return to the soil, and not let the people of Oregon beat New England in growing fruit. . . . I believe that this is one of the best farms in Massachusetts for its size and time of existence. Today there are sixteen boys and nine men on the farm. . . . I must say that if in five more years the farm increases in strength as it has the past five years, no doubt it will be as Miss Case wishes it to be, a model farm." (HILLCREST, PAST AND PRESENT, Harold R. Weaver, p. 17-20)

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In The Second Summer, *Miss Case describes a boy who loved being at Hillcrest, That boy was Philip Coburn (1899-1983), at left, one of the six original Hillcrest boys. Miss Case was a friend of his parents and invited him and his brother to worth there in the summer of 1910. In his delightful memoir* Growing Up in Weston, *he writes that, when his brother, who was two years older, heard that the pay would be a dollar a week for four hours a day, six days a week, he got back on his bicycle and went home. This worked out to four cents an hour, and he knew he could earn ten cents working for his uncle's farm hand. Coburn writes that "While the pay was small, there were other compensating factors to take into account. Each boy was provided with two khaki shirts, two pairs of long trousers, a Norfolk jacket with the emblem HC monogramed on a patch on the sleeve, a green silk necktie and a Stetson hat, all of which came from McCullar Parker, one of Boston's best clothing stores for young men. We saved a clean pair of trousers and shirt for the Monday afternoon lectures."*

"Harold is delightfully optimistic in his outlook for the future of the farm and we echo his good wishes. But these last five years have been so difficult that we sometimes wonder if our patience will hold out. The chief trouble has been to find a man to take charge, who liking boys, knew anything about agriculture, or a man wise in farm knowledge who would have patience with the boys. The remedy for this trouble lies largely with the older boys and will be overcome when they show their appreciation of the opportunities given them not only in their papers for Labor Day, but by each year doing better work on the farm. For if the older boys will give a good lead the younger ones will follow them and the happy future of Hillcrest Farm will be assured." (Marian Case, p.21)

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The Fifth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1914

". . . I have read that in our youth is the time that we are trying to do things. It is the time that is allotted to us in our life to experiment to find out what we can do and what we cannot. . . . A great many of these things we can learn only for ourselves by trying and fortunate indeed are the boys who are surrounded by the right conditions and whose failures are not scored too hard against them.

"While we as boys have been experimenting with Nature we have learned right here at Hillcrest that Nature itself is not an experiment. The laws that control the growth and ripening of the vegetables and beautiful flowers here at Hillcrest are older than any-

thing else in the world and more accurate and unchangeable than the finest machine that man has ever created.

". . . What progress do you think we boys would have made on this farm in the years that we have been here if it had not been for the foresight and planning of Miss Case, the founder of Hillcrest? . . . I believe that any boy that will spend just one summer in the work and recreation here can never forget it. It will make such an impression on his life that the memory of it will recur to him in after years many times and always be a force for good.

". . . I wish to say that the influence of Hillcrest on its workers extends right through the whole year. It seems to be a settled policy with Miss Case that when a boy has entered the work here and as long as he continues here that he is never out of her reach. The impression that the work up here makes on a boy is almost as constant as the law of gravitation. It seems to me that if you should want to weigh a boy put him on the Hillcrest scales for a year and you would get pretty close to his correct value. " (WHY I AM AT HILLCREST, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr, p. 4-5)

* * *

". . . The former Milton estate is . . . the most beautiful of our land, with a grove of tall pine trees and cedars and a brook running through it, by which a wild garden has been started. On a sunny southern slope eight hundred grapevines have been planted." (Marian Case, p. 18)

* * *

"The clubhouse was built by Mr. Mulock as a dwelling house for himself. It was then located on what is now known as Crosslots. So the house was on the land which Miss Case bought and she had it moved to its present site. Repairs were made and it was fitted to our use as a clubhouse, by installing electric lights and a fan for cooling the air, a heating apparatus and the reflectoscope. The walls were soon decorated with pictures of the boys, and other interesting pictures can also be seen on the walls." (THE CLUB-HOUSE, Everett Turck, p. 19)

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The Sixth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1915

". . . Another who came to us as a boy but who has now attained his majority, is Tom Park. He has seen the farm grow and has grown with it, so that he is now our chauffeur, bookkeeper and assistant manager. Stanley [Hobbs] has recorded the changes in our soil, as great if more subtle changes have come in the boys. I think of these when I grow faint-hearted and wonder how much longer I can carry the burden. But the old command is there: Let him who puts his hand to the plough not turn back. Our ploughs at Hillcrest are hitched to the stars." (Marian Case, p. 10)

* * *

"I am one of the boys at Hillcrest Farm and I like it very much. I think everybody does. Mr. Sweet is foreman of the place and he has it very well planted in vegetables. The things we grow at Hillcrest Farm are potatoes, corn, tomatoes, peas, onions, beets, beans, peppers, celery, carrots, cabbage, lettuce, parsley, asparagus, squash, cucumbers, oyster plants, parsnips and eggplants. The potatoes are planted on the crosslots, and down at the foot of the hill in the Milton lot. The sweet corn and most of the tomatoes are on the crosslots. The celery is under the Skinner system of pipes and where there were peas for the first crop. The squashes are back of Mr. Miltons. The peas, cabbage and lettuce are planted at different times and places, so that we can have two crops in one summer. The egg-plants are near the plums and have some purple eggs on them. Some of the boys are potting strawberries for next year's crop. (WHAT WE GROW AT HILLCREST FARM, Charles W. Green, one of the younger boys, p. 52)

The Seventh Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1916

"This Labor Day the title of my paper is The Classroom. This is a rather unusual subject because I propose to write upon it from the point of view of both teacher and pupil.

"In order to be logical and also in order that I may be better understood, I shall give a very brief history of the classroom at Hillcrest. In 1912, when Mr. Pettee had charge of the boys, it was customary to have a half hour's recess in the morning and in the afternoon. During this period Mr. Pettee would read some plays or amusing stories, or else we were permitted to spend our time as we liked best. The following year Miss Case thought it would be much better if the boys, instead of having a recess, devoted an hour to scientific research work. This plan was adopted, and every year since nineteen hundred and thirteen we boys have enjoyed the study hour or, in other words, the classroom work. The study hour not only served in place of a recess, but as a very practical period for the actual studying of agriculture.

"This year Miss Case asked me to be the teacher of the youngest class of boys. . . .

"The first thing I realized was that Hillcrest was neither a Grammar School nor a High School. That classroom methods, which are satisfactory at school, do not apply here. Profiting by the experiences of former instructors at Hillcrest I endeavored to evolve a new system which would meet the needs of the boys, a method that was systematic, efficient and interesting. . ..

"Each boy in my class was supplied with a beginner's textbook on agriculture. I had them read each chapter by turns out loud. . . .

"As I have previously intimated, the classroom work at Hillcrest is carried on in order that the boys may have a perfect understanding of the scientific management of a

farm. Perhaps the most valuable part of the classroom work is the writing of observation papers each day. This is an idea that Miss Case inaugurated this year. It trains the boys to use their eyes more accurately, for each boy writes a few lines on what he has observed that is interesting in nature or some improvement which he thinks is necessary at Hillcrest.

Rear of the clubhouse, later known as the Red Schoolhouse (2006)

"I think that my teaching has made me as a pupil more sympathetic towards my instructor. . . . This year we oldest boys have enjoyed an exceedingly practical and interesting study of our native trees conducted by Mr. Chun. Recently we made a trip to the Arnold Arboretum that we might better understand the work which we were in. . . . Perhaps it would be well to close this rather lengthy dissertation on the classroom by mentioning that President Emeritus Eliot of Harvard says that the classroom is by all means the most valuable work that Miss Case is doing at Hillcrest." (THE CLASSROOM, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 6-8)

* * *

". . . This study hour is indeed the very kernel of the boys' life at Hillcrest. For it is the time when the teachers and boys come closest together. When they study not only the lessons of the day, but are able to talk over together the larger interests of the farm. It has never been all that it might be. It is always the problem for consideration through the winter. Yet last summer when I asked Dr. George Stone of Amherst what improvement he thought I could make in the methods at Hillcrest, he advised no radical change, . . . He felt that our strength was in taking the boy instead of the college youth and in making him do the work about which he was studying. But the boys have learned more than agriculture in this study hour. Wordsworth's 'Happy Warrior' is read to them every summer and they have quickened to the courage of Sill's 'Opportunity.' This winter Mr. Joseph Gifford of the Emerson Coillege of Oratory is training their voices with vocal calisthenics. and it is delightful to hear their 'Ah noes' and 'rings' sound out. The classroom is my best time for being with the boys, and I was glad to hear that they wanted me with them for some regular morning next summer. For from the time I was just a curly head in my nursery, I have wanted a little brother. I remember so well the day when a big paper

parcel came into the house and my sisters teased me by saying it was my little brother. Great was my disappointment when it was opened to disclose only a silver water kettle. I wanted a troublesome little brother. I have found him many times repeated at the farm." (Marian Case, p. 8-9)

* * *

HILLCREST FARM

Asparagus, Dandelions and Rhubarb For Sale After May 1st

Telephone, Waltham 208

"This year we have received several prizes for our fruits and I am sure we would have received another first prize and a second, too, had we exhibited our gypsy caterpillars.

"Here at Hillcrest we have remarkable opportunities for studying various insects. Since we raise such a wide range of produce, there is a fine chance to study a great number of pests which attack vegetation. Undoubtedly the most harmful and the most abundant insect here at the farm is the gypsy caterpillar. . . .

"There are many remedies suggested, such as painting the eggs with creosote, burlapping, spraying, cutting and burning. However, in my opinion, the most effective way is spraying. Arsenate of lead is generally used, although paris green is sometimes used. One advantage of arsenate is that it stays on the foliage, while paris green is washed off very readily.

"On the farm the trees are sprayed in June with a power sprayer. One spraying does not destroy all the caterpillars, though it helps to keep down the damage considerably. We supplement the spraying with the painting of the egg clusters with creosote. This is done in winter when work is slight." (THE INSECT PROBLEMS OF HILLCREST FARM, Harold A. Mosher, p. 11-12)

* * *

"We had a prize for the best decorated car in the parade of automobiles on the Fourth of July. The Ford truck car was decorated with garlands of oak leaves and peonies. On its sides in large letters were the lines from Locksley Hall:—

'Till the war drum throbb'd no longer and the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of Man the Federation of the World.'

Four boys rode in the car, Harold Mosher in the center as the angel of peace in white with large wings. Grouped around him were William White in a white sailor suit carrying the furled American flag and Wilbur Hallett with the quiet drum, while behind them were Charles Green and William Skillens with the flying Hillcrest flag for peace

and agriculture and a large sheaf of flowers." (Marian Case, p. 36-37)

* * *

"For in the winter of 1916 I was ill and seemed to lose my vision for the farm. I consulted friends who had previously helped me to know what they felt would be its best future development. One of them knowing how many difficulties I had already had to overcome said, "Why not give it up?" I was ill and tired but not ill enough for that. Then Dr. Councilman came with his interest, and enthusiasm and like a good physician inspired me with courage to go on. Yet the overcoming of its many difficulties has helped me as well as the boys. It has also given me good physical health and the joy of a big, strong purpose in life." (Marian Case, p. 55-56)

The Eighth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1917

"Why not give up having the boys at the farm?" asked a friend in our hour of discouragement. We had appealed to him for advice in so many difficulties. But he had previously predicted that our troubles would be over when our boys were old enough to help us. His prophecy proved true. This summer we have had the same force as last year. Mr. Mezit (sic) as foreman, with four of our boys in positions of responsibility on the farm. Tom Park, our business manager, was only fifteen when he first came to Hillcrest. Mr. Chun was nineteen. Stanley Hobbs and Harold Mosher were among the first of the Hillcrest boys. These three now superintend and teach the boys. . . . At Hillcrest we have run our plough through rough, uncultivated land. It has caught in many a stubble, but it has been hitched to the stars." (Marian Case, p. 5-6)

* * *

"This year, because of the World War, agriculture has been called upon to do its part. The result is an enormous increase in tilled land, together with the conservation of food. What has Hillcrest Farm done to answer its country's call? Miss Case, realizing that every particle of food that could be raised for home use would release just that much more for the maintenance of our allies and our own armies, has adopted some new policies.

"A carload of fruit jars was bought in May and sold at cost during the summer. The employees have been increased in number. The first three lectures all dealt with the conservation of food and have exerted their influence in the community. Five acres of land were bought and planted with potatoes, cabbages and squash. Approximately twenty-five acres of land—twice as much as in 1915—are cultivated. Intensive farming has been pursued. As an illustration bush beans and melons were planted in alternate

rows on the same land. The bean vines bore and were removed, now the melons are harvested." (THE NATION'S CALL AND HOW WE ANSWERED IT, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 9-10)

* * *

"It may be surprising to some people to think that the Hillcrest Boys did canning, but such is the case. Canning has been a new departure from our former work. . . .

"The canning was done at The Sentinels where the kitchen was equipped with an oil stove and other necessary articles. Miss Case secured Miss Randolph of Wayland, to teach the boys and to do the canning. Among the vegetables and fruits we put up were beets, corn, celery, tomatoes, Swiss chard, beans, peas, plums, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, wineberries and cherries. In all we have canned over nine hundred jars." (CANNING, Edward J. Cain, p. 35)

* * *

"Although Hillcrest Farm is a commercial farm for growing fruits and vegetables, one of the most important features of the place is the flower garden. It has always been Miss Case's idea to have the boys learn not only how to grow things of use, but also to acquire a love for the beautiful. For this reason she makes a great deal of the flower garden by The Sentinels. One of the most interesting parts of the flower garden is the rose garden." (ROSES, Daniel Nason, Jr. p. 40)

* * *

"Sometimes I wonder if the good people of Weston who buy these vegetables at low market prices delivered at their doors, ever stop to wonder who pays for raising them and the berries, plums, apples and peaches which three times a week are sent around the town.

"Once there was a little child who offered her precious box of birthday candy to a gentleman who was busy talking politics with her father. The man took a piece and went on talking. The child waited. Her mother spoke to her. The child looked up and said, 'Why, he didn't say thank you.' Perhaps a more generous child would have had joy just in the giving, but her sense of balance was disturbed. She was troubled and perplexed. The girl grew up, she owned lands, she could make beautiful gardens for herself such as she had seen in foreign lands. She could build a house for herself from the windows of which she could see the fall of snow on her pine trees in winter. But the woman had a vision. She saw men and women whose lives had been narrowed because their childhoods had been cramped. She saw men fighting losing battles with themselves because they needed not only gentleness but strength. She saw men enjoying high public favor while forgetting the beautiful consecration of their lives. Could they as boys at Hillcrest gain the physical strength to make their whole lives so full and happy that they would be ready when the hours of trial come? Could she at Hillcrest start the boys to lead such lives as would fill her woman's dream of what the lives of men might be? Each summer the boys hear of these dreams in the inspiration of the poets." (Marian Case, p. 45)

The Ninth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston, by the Farmers, 1918

"In November we had received from the Bureau of Plant Industry an interesting list of New Plant Introductions of which we checked between sixty and seventy as those which we would like to try.

". . . We watch each plant with the greatest interest. . . . For we feel that we hold these plants in trust, that they are the little links connecting our work at Hillcrest with the greater work of the nation. The Arnold Arboretum is doing important work with the shrubs and trees, but as Mr. Ernest H. Wilson told us on his visit to Hillcrest there is still much to be done along herbaceous lines, which might well include our native flora.

"All these experiments are very interesting, but we feel now while the war lasts that we must do our part in raising food, especially—as in May—we received the following note from Mrs. Alfred R. Pratt and a petition signed by sixty-four of our neighbors: 'The accompanying petition will, I hope, assure you how greatly Weston people appreciate Hillcrest Farm. If more names are needed to make that assurance doubly sure, I am certain they will be forthcoming.' The petition read: 'We, the undersigned, desire to express our appreciation of the service rendered to the townspeople during the past by Hillcrest Farm, and to request that its products will continue to be distributed in Weston.'" (Marian Case, p. 17)

* * *

"As the marketing of the great variety of berries, fruits, and vegetables is of as much importance as the growing of them at Hillcrest, I have taken that subject for my essay this year.

"To begin with, I will divide it into three distinct branches as follows: the selling directly to customers who come to the farm; the trips which the team makes twice a week to Waltham, and the route which is covered three times each week through Weston by the truck.

The Hillcrest pin displaying the H-C logo was awarded at the end of the first summer. The pin was one of many similarities between Hillcrest and the Boy Scouts, which was established in the United States in 1910 and also encouraged fitness, self-reliance, patriotism, and community service.

"Compared with other years the sales have been greater at the farm this year than any other season. Probably the most prominent reason for this is the increase in the number of customers who own automobiles and come to the farm in their cars getting the berries and vegetables fresh picked. . . .

". . . Each Monday, which is lecture afternoon throughout the whole season, all the berries and vegetables then ripe are place on exhibition in the clubhouse and after the lecture are ready for sale. . .

"In former years, the team was sent on regular trips through Auburndale, but as this was found to be a non-paying venture it was discontinued and the whole attention was given to Waltham on the Wednesday and Saturday trips in charge of Adelmar Campana with the help of two boys.

"These trips to Waltham are handled in a systematic and thorough manner. The team is carefully loaded very early with a good quantity of each fruit and vegetable that is ripe and is drawn down into the most thickly populated districts. One boy takes each side of the street and a thorough canvas is made so that everybody may be supplied with the fresh produce at very moderate prices. I think there is no one feature connected with Hillcrest during the entire season which gives a more satisfying and business-like appearance than the team when it leaves the farm on one of these trips. The large market wagon is piled high with boxes neatly arranged and drawn by Win, the older and more trustworthy of the pair of grays. It certainly looks as though Hillcrest raised something more than just seed for next year's planting.

The Hillcrest work horses (1935 photo)

"Miss Case started the auto truck during the fourth season of the farm and I might say right here that this represents speed and quick delivery. The truck is in charge of Mr. Thomas Park assisted by one of the older boys and covers the town of Weston pretty thoroughly every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning. Everything that is in season is handled by the truck and they are carried so promptly to the homes of the customers

that it does not seem as though the dew on the leaves had a chance to evaporate before the produce is delivered to each patron at his door.

The selling of the produce brings the boys in contact with the customers and is very instructive to them. It is one branch of the farm work which gives the boys a good business training and also helps them to develop patience and tact as they meet so many different kinds of customers." (MARKETING AT HILLCREST, Joseph Hobbs, p. 30-32)

* * *

"Another more serious consideration for the farm is that of our prices. In these days of the high cost of living we like to put our prices as low as possible for the sake of our customers, but we wish to be fair to the farmers in the town. This matter we took up as carefully as we could last spring. We found that Hillcrest was well liked by the Grange, where we are always cordially thanked for our annual exhibits there. For several years we have received the blue ribbon for the best general display at the Grange. This year our table looked better than ever, but after having spent the whole of the previous afternoon in arranging our crops, at half past eleven the day of the fair it was called off on account of the serious epidemic of influenza which was then running through the State. The schools had been closed in Weston and later the churches were closed. No public gatherings were allowed. All funerals were private. Starting at the Commonwealth Pier in Boston the influenza spread throughout the Nation.

"We were the only ones who had arranged our table at the Grange and much appreciation was given it by those who came to the hall. Last spring we made thorough inquiries as to whether Hillcrest was harming the other farmers of the town and were told decidedly no. One of our well known townsmen said, 'Hillcrest is doing good work. It is interfering with nobody. Go ahead.'

"Our work at Hillcrest is twofold: to grow fruit and vegetables, to teach the boys so that they will love and enjoy nature." (Marian Case, p. 33-34)

* * *

The Tenth Summer at Hillcrest Farm by the Farmers, 1919

"Hillcrest is no longer only a Weston institution, for it is well known in Washington, having received many plants for propagation from the Bureau of Plant Industry. Professor Sargent has sent us a hundred shrubs from the Arnold Arboretum, besides seventeen cherries and twenty-seven lilacs from his greenhouse in Brookline. At the last exhibition in Horticultural Hall Hillcrest received three second prizes, one gratuity and eight first prizes. In two of the second prizes we were our own competitor. Hillcrest is furthermore closely associated with the Women's National Farm and Garden Association. Hardly a week has passed this summer but what the magazine *Horticulture* has had a letter from Hillcrest. This last year much has been done to propagate wild flowers. . . . Hill-

crest has also become interested in foreign trees and shrubs, sending to Mr. Pettey in South Africa for some. Dr. Grenfell is collecting for us in Labrador, and we are expecting results from Mr. Chun's trip.

"This year there has been a much larger attendance at the lectures than previously, due perhaps to a greater appreciation of Hillcrest.

"Reference was made to the Semper Paratus Boys or the Guards of the Hillcrest Flag, eight in number, who wear the Semper Paratus pins. This organization through these ten years has only eight members, due to demands placed on all who seek its membership. It should be an exclusive group, but let us organize it more soundly, advertise it more among the boys that they may claim admittance, and thus obtain more worthy advocates of Hillcrest. (TEN YEARS AT HILLCREST, E Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 11-12)

* * *

"Dr. Hobbs in his paper on the history of our ten years. . . speaks of the Guards of the Flag, an order of boys who are entitled to wear the Semper Paratus pin on account of faithful work on the Farm and loyalty to the Hillcrest flag. . . .When the pins were given to these boys they were told that as Guards of the Hillcrest flag they were expected to be loyal to the spirit of Hillcrest in showing the dignity of manual labor, the worth of honest thought, and the spirit of public service. (Marian Case, p. 13)

* * *

"Besides the fruit, flowers and vegetables which were shown [at the Grange Fair in Weston] we displayed a card giving the crops we had raised through the summer as follows: Apples (200 bushels), Peaches (100 bushels), Pears (10 bushels), Plums (10 bushels), Cherries (8 bushels), Grapes (110 bushels), Gooseberries (250 baskets), Blackberries (500 baskets), Currants (2000 baskets), Raspberries (2500 baskets), Strawberries (1500 baskets), Melons (75 baskets), Asparagus (1200 bunches), Beans (40 bushels), Carrots (50 bushels), Corn (450 bushels), Cucumbers (50 bushels), Egg Plant (25 bushels), Peas (35 bushels), Potatoes (450 bushels), Onions (50 bushels), Tomatoes (500 bushels), Cabbage (1000 bushels), Cauliflower (800 bushels), Celery (2500 heads), Squash (2 tons).

The Hillcrest logo, an interlaced H-C, is seen on this iron gate along Wellesley Street. It was probably made by Weston blacksmith Oliver Patriquin, who made ironwork items for many local estates.

"With all these vegetables and fruits it seems as if Hillcrest should be self-supporting, but it is so far from

that that we are often tempted to give up the commercial side of the Farm and devote its land entirely to scientific work and the pleasures of gardening. But the slogan of the war for the production of food is still being cried and we feel that Hillcrest as at present carried on helps the people of Weston." (Marian Case, p. 16-17)

* * *

"When we started Hillcrest ten years ago we realized that we had thrown a pebble into a pond and did not know how far it might eddy. The work of Hillcrest is manifold. Through the summer we employ twenty boys on the Farm to teach them and to keep them busy through their long vacation from school. We run a vegetable garden for our neighbors. This last summer we have started what will eventually be one of the most valuable pieces of work done on the Farm in making it a preserve for the wild flowers of New England. We are also testing plants of various sorts in our climate for the Bureau of New Plant Introduction in Washington, and we are hoping to do some good work with roses.

"Hillcrest like all new projects had to make its own place in the town. It started before the days of farmerettes, and it was hard for our neighbors to understand what fun Miss Marian Case found in farming. But the doctors understood. They realized that my need and liking for an out-of-door life with the desire that we all have today for service was finding this expression. Dr. William T. Councilman in his address one Labor Day spoke with appreciation, not only of the work which is being done at Hillcrest, but also of its future, when others will carry on the work which we have been able only to start. " (Marian Case, 18-19)

* * *

"Hillcrest has won many friends through the decade of its existence. Yet perhaps the two who have helped us most through their understanding of our difficulties and interest in our work are Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum and Mr. Wilfrid Wheeler, former Commissioner of Agriculture in Massachusetts. So this year when we thought of changing the name from Hillcrest Farm to Hillcrest Gardens we consulted them and were glad to have their joint approval. We felt that Hillcrest Gardens better defined the work we are doing here in horticulture, floriculture and vegetable gardening. It also more correctly states our ambitions for the future." (Marian Case, p. 88)

* * *

"...if I may be personal I wish to say to you, Miss Case, that you embody the spirit of my theme; you are doing here exactly what I am urging in this paper; for the spirit of this undertaking of yours is the spirit of democracy, the true American spirit, and the purpose of this experimental farm is to the last degree educational. You are applying to life here, not theorizing about it, the ideal of democracy that all the world has been to war for, and right here you are making Hillcrest—our small portion of the world—safe for democracy. (Prof. Dallas Lore Sharp, p. 89)

Hillcrest Gardens, Weston, Massachusetts: The Eleventh Summer by The Gardeners, 1920

"Hillcrest Gardens are a failure. As farm and garden they have been running for eleven summers and are not yet paying their expenses. A similar stricture could be brought against Harvard University. John Harvard never saw the university which now bears his name, though he must have had his dreams." (Marian Case, p.5)

* * *

"Every year, Miss Case has let us take her automobile to have rides on Saturday afternoons. This year we had three rides. The first ride was to Concord. There we saw the Minute Man, the statue of Emerson, and where the first Concord grapes were grown. The second ride was to Salem, where we saw The House of Seven Gables, the Salem Museum, and the Essex Institute. The third and last ride, which went to Sharon, was the most interesting of the three. There in the Bird Sanctuary we saw many varieties of birds and their eggs, also butterflies from all over the world.

"This year Miss Case was awarded a great many prizes by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. [The report contains a detailed list]

"On August thirteenth we had our annual picnic, which the boys look for all the year. We went to Nantasket, which is our favorite place. We had our dinner there and went into the amusement park. Every boy had a very enjoyable time." (THE HISTORY OF HILLCREST GARDENS, Forest Zoller, Jr. p. 6-8)

* * *

Hillcrest won many awards for exhibits such as this one at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1921.

"Last year Hillcrest was the fortunate recipient of the silver medal for the most beautiful display of fruit at the November exhibition of the Horticultural Society. This year we were awarded the W.B.H. Dowse Trophy for the best display of vegetables during the summer, winning by two hundred and twenty-six points over Faulkner Farm with one hundred and thirty points and Mr. Oliver Ames with one hundred and fourteen. We are so proud of this beautiful silver vase that we had its picture put on our cover. . . ." (Marian Case, p. 10)

* * *

"This summer the experiment of having two boys living at Hillcrest proved so successful that we plan to have three more here next summer. . . .

"Close to the farm is an old-fashioned house in good repair in which we mean to have three more boys cared for during the ten weeks that the boys are on the farm. This summer we had eleven boys from Weston, four from Waltham and three from Auburndale, whhich, with the two boys at Mrs. Olson's, made our full number of twenty." (Marian Case, p. 16-17)

Hillcrest Gardens, Weston, Massachusetts: The Twelfth Summer, by The Gardeners, 1921

"The latest addition to Hillcrest Gardens is the incinerator, which will prove its value by conserving ashes, for as you know, ashes contain potash.

"This structure was made of stones collected from stonewalls which at one time bounded Hillcrest Gardens from other property. Its dimensions are seventeen feet high and twenty feet in diameter at the bottom, and six feet at the top. The entrance is on the north side so as to accommodate its approach from the road and also for the draught on that side. It is seven feet high and eight feet wide so that a large dump cart can deposit its contents within."The ordinary bonfire is sometimes a menace as it spreads in the woods to houses, haystacks, etc., so a screen is placed over the top of the incinerator to prevent the escape of sparks. Rubbish, corn stalks, scraping, etc. can be burned at Hillcrest without fear of the future." (THE INCINERATOR, Narcisse Geoffrion, p. 27)

* * *

"This year for the first time the produce of Hillcrest Gardens is being sold at the Willowplate Tearoom on Central Avenue, Weston [Ed note: now Boston Post Road). Mrs. Green (who formerly had charge of the Tearoom) has control of this market, and on Saturdays I have had the pleasure of helping her. Week days this market is open from nine to twelve o'clock, but on Saturdays it is kept open until four o'clock.

"Every morning the choicest of fruits and vegetables are sent down to the market."(HILLCREST MARKET, by Percy Warren, p. 27-28)

"One of the ideas of Hillcrest is to promote horticulture and floriculture by introducing foreign plants and experimenting upon their care and cultivation. Some of these introductions have been very successful with the conditions we have to offer them. For instance, the South African plants, which are the gift of Mr. Franklin W. Pettey, a former instructor here, have flowered while we have had them, but owning to our climatic conditions the plants from Labrador do not blossom for us.

"We have received a great many shrubs and trees from Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum. These have come principally from China and Japan. " (FOREIGN PLANT INTRODUCTIONS TO HILLCREST, Dennis M. Crowley, p.30)

* * *

"Besides our farm work, such as pruning, weeding, transplanting, and picking berries, we have in our days work an hour for study. During this hour we have different work for each day. Monday we have our observation papers. In these we write about any new thing which we have discovered on the farm, a new insect, a new flower, or perhaps it may be that we have had the pleasure of watching some of the birds build their nests. Whatever it may be, we write about it in our observation papers.

"Tuesday we have our study hour with Mr. Stanton and are taught how fruit and vegetables are grown at Hillcrest Gardens.

"Wednesday, as you have already heard, we have both an interesting and an instructive lecture by prominent men from all parts of the country. We take notes on these and on Thursday we are obligated to make a report of these lectures for Miss Case.

"Friday Miss Case supervises the class. She criticizes our papers and often reads to us some of the famous poems. Saturday we have only a half day, so we have no study hour." (THE STUDY HOUR, Robert Lassman, p. 47)

* * *

Our sixth lecture was on "Old Farm Life in New England," by Mr. Fletcher Steele. He told us that the reason people of old did not raise such good crops was because they did not have satisfactory tools, and they had to be very careful not to waste. Mr. Steele told us about the houses of the early settlers. In front of the house was a stockade for protection against wild animals. Inside was a garden with trees in the four corners. At the back was a long path leading to a summer house. On each side of this were fruit trees. The coolest place was the grape-arbor where the women would do their sewing and weaving after their hot days in the kitchen." (THE LECTURES, by Daniel J. Mulhern, p. 43)

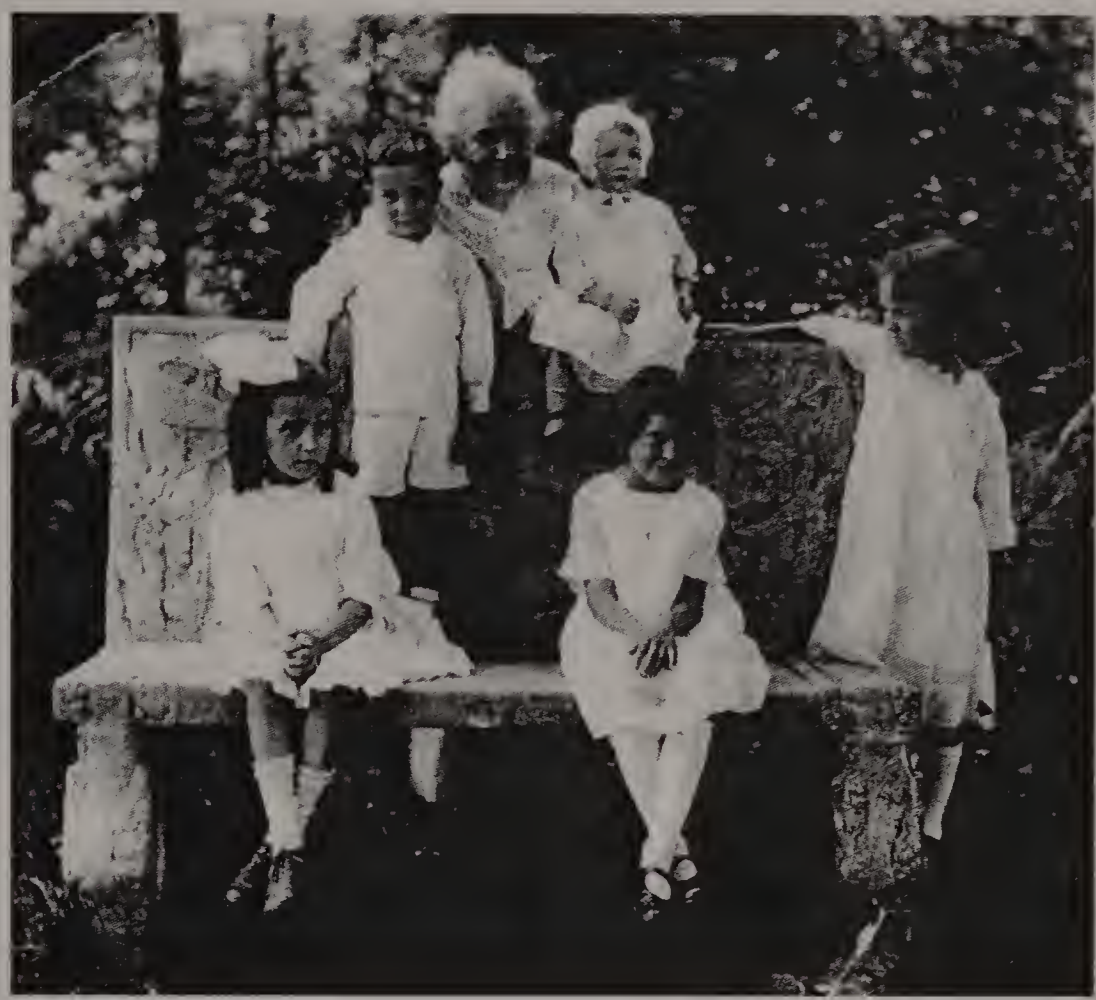
* * *

"I have decided to take as my subject the flower garden. The wood road here at my left leads to the flower garden. We have about an acre of land for our cultivated roses and flowers. We have seventy-two flower beds. There are about seven hundred species of flowers at Hillcrest. We made these beds all over, removing some of the soil and filling in with barnyard manure. We used about a thousand pounds of lime for the soil.

"We have some very beautiful rose beds and an arbor covered with roses. We have one long bed of iris. As we walk farther through the garden we come to a bed of gladiolus, walking by the rose arch we come to a bed of sweet-williams and poppies. Along the side of this bed is another filled with larkspurs.

"Among the flowers in our garden are pansies, California poppies, day lilies, petunias, lupines, speedwells, Shasta daisies, holyhocks, fuchsias, Iceland poppies, peonies, and autumn asters. Several of the boys have worked every day in the garden weeding, transplanting, and pruning.

"We decorate our lecture room with flowers from our garden every Wednesday afternoon. Some of our flowers we send to the exhibitions at Horticultural Hall.



The cement bench mentioned in the report above is shown in this photograph, taken about 1922, when Marian Case was about 58 years old. She poses with the children of her employees, who are all carefully outfitted in white. The two youngest, Jack and Irene Williams, are in the top row. Vyvyian Williams and Emily Olson are seated and Laura Mezitt stands at the side of the bench, which was located behind 101 Wellesley Street.

"One of the new objects in our garden is a cement seat built this summer by Mr. Russell G. Crook of Lincoln, Massachusetts. It is certainly beautiful and I would like to have you see it before you go home. Our garden is kept in good order by our head gardener, Mr. Allen. After the exercises I hope you may visit the flower garden, and also you will notice our new flower beds by the wood road which the boys helped to make at Hillcrest this summer." (THE FLOWER GARDEN, Mitchell Simon, p. 56)

* * *

(Excerpts from the Green Books of 1922 to 1943 will be included in the next issue of *The Weston Historical Society Bulletin*)

From the Editor: It's dues time again. Our fiscal year starts each fall. Your membership entitles you to two issues of the *Bulletin* each year, as well as invitations to programs and events, PLUS you are supporting our efforts to preserve Weston historical materials and educate residents about the history of our town. We try to keep the dues low but welcome additional contributions. The society's annual meeting and fall program will be held on Thursday, November 30, 7:30 pm.

The Weston Historical Society would like to thank Fred Campbell for his gift of butter-making tools belonging to the Dean estate. Fred's grandfather was the caretaker of the estate and his grandmother made the butter. Among the items are two butter molds, one with the estate name, Oakridge, and the other Myakka, which was the name of Dean's Florida cabin cruiser. Fred also donated a milk bottle from Ferndale Farm and two unusual postcards, one of Glen Farms dairy and the other of Ferndale Farm dairy.

Thanks also to our newest life members: Jane T.N. Fogg, John and Nathalie Thompson, and Nick and Karin Leschly.

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Joe Mullin
Beth Nolan
Tony Nolan
Chris Paquin
Sam Payson
Carol Snow

Membership dues: Individuals $15, family $15, life membership $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston MA 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained for $5 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 2005 Volume XXXVI, No.1

Oliver Patriquin, Weston's Last Town Blacksmith

Letter from Calvin Patriquin to Pamela Fox, received January 29, 2001

[My father, Oliver Patriquin, the village smithy] came down from Nova Scotia alone at the age of twelve, settling in Boston first. It must have been an almost overwhelming experience to be in the melting pot with thousands of immigrants mainly of Irish, Italian, Jewish and German extraction, all struggling to make America their home. He told me that his first job was with an ice man carrying heavy blocks of ice up many flights of stairs in tenement

buildings while the Irish ice man waited for him in the nearest pub. Also at this time very gifted German ornamental iron workers took him in and taught him the blacksmith trade along with horseshoeing. I would like to mention that the Irish taught him the art of boxing. I have a number of medals awarded him in his youth. When the influenza epidemic struck Massachusetts he moved his young family to Chestnut Street, Weston, where he remained the rest of his life. He set up the blacksmith shop in the center of town. It was located between the red book store on the right [494 Boston Post Road, then the Village Book Stall, now Cambridge Trust Company] and the block of stores on the left [where Florentine Frames is today]. The barn [that] the shop was in was eventually torn down and the present brick building [486 Boston Post Road] was first a post office and I think now business office [now Weston Pediatric Physicians].

I remember as a child bringing my friends in the shop. If dad was not too busy he would make all of us rings made out of horseshoe nails. He had a number of employees at the time. It was a very busy shop with the ringing of hammers striking the anvils and horses milling around waiting to be shod. There was always a number of old timers sitting around telling stories.

Things went well for a number of years. All of the estates in town had something made from his shop: beautiful garden gates, driveway entrance gates, beautiful interior iron stair railings, fireplace andirons and screens, door hardware, and all sizes and shapes of plant holders. The ironwork I was most familiar with was at the Case estate, where I worked summers. Anyway, everything went well for my father until the great Depression struck. He, like many others, was forced to downsize, so he moved his shop up on the corner of Love Lane and Boston Post Road. The small building is still there. I would go around with him to the estates....to shoe their saddle horses, work horses, and sometimes oxen. He had horse shoes already made hanging all around the shop for all the horses stabled at these estates. He would do wagon repairs, etc. and horse shoeing for farmers who could not pay, so in return they would supply him with hay and vegetables. I remember one farmer who built us a stone wall that took two years. I suppose dad would shoe his horses and he would come over and work on the wall.

He was truly the village smithy with a large shade tree out front of his shop in the center of Weston. He did part time work right up into his later years. House restorers came to his home giving him orders for hardware...

Now a little bit about myself. As I mentioned before we lived on Chestnut Street a short distance up the street from the Thomas Allen house [One Chestnut St). When we were living there it was known as the Slayton House. A family with two boys, John and Holly, who we played with. There was also a large barn with the house—since torn down—that we would play hide and seek in on rainy days. There was a hill owned by Regis College across the street for sledding and tobogganing in the winter time. Perhaps the most enjoyable time on rainy days was the upstairs in the Slayton house. They had Lionell train tracks laid out everywhere, down the halls, in and out of all the bedrooms, anywhere there was floor there was tracks, stations, sidings, everything. They also had a pony. We would all take turns riding. This was a real fun time of our lives. Since then as you know the house has been

Blacksmith Shop, Love Lane, 2005

Calvin Patriquin, c. late 1930s

restored, the barn torn down, and a smaller structure replaced it.

I operated a small business in town for a number of years. I, like my father, did remodeling and general carpentry at many of these estates in town. I stored my building equipment in the right hand section of the Coburn red barn on Church Street [154 Church Street]. I also did all of the carpenter work on the Coburn house across the street —lovely home [No.153]. Mrs. Coburn was well along in years, middle or upper 90's. She loved to garden. She would work in the flower beds for hours. When she could not stand up she would call as loud as she could for help. She also liked to ride in the car. Her house person would take her out every afternoon and sometimes all day for long country rides. Sweet person.

I built and lived with my wife Joan and two boys John and David in the white saltbox house on the corner of Fiske Lane and Merriam Street [now 10 Fiske Lane].

Letter from Calvin Patriquin to Pamela Fox, received March 12, 2001

Shortly after arriving in Weston my father purchased a piece of land on Chestnut St…I am not sure, but probably from the Barkers [Amri Barker lived at what is now 52 Chestnut Street]. The property is long and fairly narrow, located on the first driveway on the left coming up Chestnut St. from Wellesley St. It fronts, of course, on Chestnut St. and the rear borders on Regis College land. Over time he was able to build four houses on this land. A lot of ledge was discovered when the foundations were being excavated. Huge fires made with brush & large pieces of wood were set on the ledge. When the fires died down and the rock was extremely hot, cold water was thrown on the ledge. It was like the Fourth of July. The ledge would then split up into manageable pieces used to build the stone foundations. Three of these houses had stone foundations built in this manner. He also set up a small saw mill to saw framing lumber, etc. The first house on Chestnut Street [No.40, c. 1920] was built by Bill Henderson, who lived up the street, after the foundation was in. The

second house [No.38] was built by William Compton [of] Golden Ball Road. The third house [No. 36] was built by my father with the help of several carpenters. This house has a beautiful wrought iron stair railing going up the stairs and down the hall. This was of his own design, ornamental leaves, etc. The fieldstone fireplace had his andirons, screen, and tools. The fourth house up [No. 34] was more of a summer camp. We lived there for several early Depression years. The roof and walls were covered with heavy tarpaper. The only plumbing in the house was a water closet in the bathroom, and a sink in the large room. For lighting, a large oil lamp that was suspended from the open rafters, and could be moved up or down by pulling on a small chain. The large wood stove in the middle of the large room provided enough heat to warm the three small bedrooms. Eventually my father finished this house. This is where they lived in later years. He also had his blacksmith shop here. These houses have had improvements made over the years—additions, garages, etc. and fit in well. He had a lot of ambition and drive to put all of this together, plus maintaining his blacksmith business. The same is true of others in your book, some like my father, who had very little education. I was able to find two of his ancient ledger books. What a simple way of doing business.

After working at Hillcrest Farm for two summers for small wages, and a very strong dislike of pulling weeds, my father was able to get me a job at the Dickson Estate for two summers. [The estate of Brenton H. Dickson Jr. was at the corner of Highland Street and Love Lane]. One of my chores was gathering vegetables for the kitchen. Upon entering the kitchen, the

40 Chestnut Street before recent renovations

Irish cook would sit me down at the large table and serve fresh baked bread dripping with home made butter, donuts, pie, cake, or whatever else came out of the over, along with a fresh cup of coffee. I looked forward to this ritual every day. It is said that later in life Ruth Dickson's eyesight began to fail, but she still continued to ride her horse along the many trails. Her favorite horse seemed to know of the dangers on all of these trails, such as low limbs, etc., and would automatically avoid them.

The Paine house [Highland Street]...[had a] great hall and the beautiful oak staircase. On a dark or rainy day, going up the stairs could be a little scary with all of those African animal trophies staring down at you. Especially the lion and tiger with teeth barred. The third floor workshop was of real interest. It was full of state of the art woodworking machinery. I often wondered where this machinery ended up…

Alexander Sauer [farmer at 412 Highland Street] did have a sour disposition. He would reprimand us if we walked across his property. He owned this large steam driven tractor used for plowing, etc. the farm. Probably one of the last steam tractors used for farming. We would hide in the woods near the edge of the field and watch [in] amazement as the monster moved up and down the field. We could only imagine what a ride would be like, but did not dare ask.

Editor's note: Memoirs are an important source of information on local history. This issue contains two examples. Calvin Patriquin (1927-2005) talks about his father, Oliver (1882-1972), the village blacksmith, and his childhood on Chestnut Street. If you know the whereabouts of any of Oliver Patriquin's ironwork, please contact the Weston Historical Society. Below, Charles Wells Hubbard (1856-1933) describes his family estate on Orchard Avenue. Information in brackets has been added by the editor. The Weston Historical Society encourages all residents to write down their memories of life in Weston and send them to WHS, Box 343, Weston MA 02493.

Selections from "Autobiographical Notes" by Charles W. Hubbard

In 1866 my father [Charles Townsend Hubbard] bought the old Slack farm where we first lived in the old farm house, close to the Mail (?) Road just below my daughter Nancy's present home [Nancy was his nickname for Anne Swain Hubbard Jr., later Mrs. Edward Wheeler] And since that time the family's greatest interest has been in our family estates on or near this original purchase—my sisters originally having had homes here. My sister Louise's home stood where my daughter Mrs. Wheeler now has hers [100 Orchard Avenue].

In 1880 the death of his father-in-law and more successful business results found my father so well off that he went to Europe for a year and built the house lived in by my father and myself for so many years—located above the Railroad…. [Ridgehurst at 80 Orchard Avenue]

In the early days when all my sisters were at home the old farm house was well filled with our guests – and we had at times 8 or 9 carriage and saddle horses. I believe the people passing on the R.R. thought we kept a boarding house and livery stable. In addition to our driving and riding we had boats on the river – which at that time could not have had more than 20 boats between our place and Waltham. In short we lived under ideal conditions for having a good time with our friends – one of my old friends in later years referring to these old times said he remembered sitting down with twenty at breakfast. One of the plagues of that time which recent science and care have almost driven away was the swarms of

Slack Farmhouse
Courtesy of Stanley French Jr.

Ridgehurst, 80 Orchard Avenue
Courtesy of Paula Schwenk

mosquitoes and flies. As I now look back I see the conditions for freedom there were perfect – but of course no one realized that. And this leads me to remark on the immense advance in the sciences in sanitation hygiene during my life. In various ways how much easier it has made life.

One rather unique feature of our life was our little private theatre. When the place was bought there was an outbuilding – a large billiard room – It was used by us as a Laundry – One summer when I was about 14 I fitted up a rough stage, and we children gave a little play. My father was so much interested that he had the building enlarged putting in quite a complete little stage; - in the fitting of which I had a chance to exercise my love of carpentry.

Each summer of 1871 72 73 we gave several plays in this theatre and there are now in my library two bound volumes of these plays. I have always felt that this amateur acting had an educational value – our company consisted of Carrie and Mabel Case who lived about three miles away and Will and Walter Bush. Their older sister Fanny our acting manager – my sister Annie and myself – with now and then a guest at the house to help out. I remember one amusing incident. Old Mr. Sewall like other slightly deaf people sometimes made audible comments – and in a scene where I was playing the lover he remarked – "Does it pretty well does he not – looks as if he really meant it."

The young Charles Wells Hubbard (bottom right) and his sister Anne (top left) are pictured here with friends. Photo courtesy of Stanley French Jr.

Editor's note: Hubbard goes on to describe his "tramping" trips to the White Mountains, Adirondacks and Maine woods, his experience at the great Boston fire, his social clubs, and various other residences. The memoir continues below.

My sister Louise's home having been bought by our friend Livingston Cushing – and he and his wife being most congenial neighbors – I sold additional land to them including our original farm cottage – moving our other farm buildings to their present location – Years later after Mr. Cushing's death I bought back this property about 14 acres – including my sister's old home, the log cabin and the large stable and garage built by Mr. Cushing [now 140 Orchard Avenue] – the latter was later converted into the house in which I now live – under the following circumstances. At our entrance into the great war I offered our home Ridgehurst as a hospital – and in view of having to move out of this I decided to make the Cushing Stable into a home as we were able to design a very satisfactory plan – as it went on my wife and I became so interested that we elaborated it more than originally intended – and being satisfied that it would be a more comfortable and convenient house for our small family we decided to move in; and when able to dispose of Ridgehurst to do so – as I feared that none of my children could afford to support it, and I preferred to dispose of it myself rather than leave it as a White Elephant for my Estate.

Editor's note: Ridgehurst, which still stands at 80 Orchard Avenue, was never used by the Red Cross. After the Hubbards moved to Barnstable House at 140 Orchard Avenue, the main house was rented or left vacant until his son, Charles Wells Hubbard Jr., lived there for a time in the 1930s. The Hubbards owned the house until 1945 and were followed by George N. and Anna Chamberlain Jr. (1945-80) and Harold and Paula Schwenk (1980 to present). Further pages of the extensive autobiography discuss Hubbard's career as head of the Ludlow Manufacturing Company.

Livingston Cushing stable and barn, converted to Barnstable House. Photo courtesy of Tom Paine

The Transformation of 809-811 Boston Post Road

Until the fall of 2004, the property at 809-811 Boston Post Road was notorious for its dilapidated condition and ever-changing front-yard stockpiles of broken, water-damaged furniture and rusty vehicles. Today, the house and barn have each been transformed into two condominium units in a new development called Post Road Green. Behind the historic buildings are two new duplexes. The first residents moved in this summer.

Carol Seto undertook this challenging project as a Local Initiative Petition (LIP) under State Chapter 40B. The Town of Weston contributed $380,000 of Community Preservation Act funds and required the developer to place a preservation restriction on the house and barn. Keeping the two mid-19th century buildings was considered a town priority because of their prominent position on the Boston Post Road, which is a National Register Historic District for its entire length in Weston.

Chapter 40B was set up to increase the state's stock of affordable housing and allows developers to ignore local zoning requirements. Twenty-five percent of the units must be affordable under state income guidelines and will be sold to eligible first-time homebuyers who make no more than 80% of area median income, adjusted for household size. The two lucky winners chosen by lottery will each pay $165,800 for their condominium unit. The affordable units will remain so in perpetuity.

Since the town's 250th anniversary in 1963, researchers including myself have been incorrect about the age and history of the house at 809-811 Boston Post Road. The physical appearance of the house suggests a mid- century date rather than the early 19th century date previously assigned. Certain features are characteristic of the Italianate style, which dominated American house construction between about 1850 and 1880, for example, the narrow trim boards, 2/2 window sash, original front door (since replaced) and interior newel post. The Colonial Revival porch was added in 1910.

Researchers in the 1960s and 70s concluded, again incorrectly, that No. 809-811 was the house referred to on page 154 in Daniel S. Lamson's *History of the Town of Weston*, which states: "Ralph Abrahams, of the Isaac Jones family, kept a store on what is now the Minor property. The store stood east of the present house. In 1820, Abrahams sold the property to Alpheus Bigelow and Bigelow sold to Oliver Shed, who remained until 1830, when the store was destroyed by fire." I repeated this information in my book *Farm Town to Suburb* but I am now certain that Lamson was referring to another property, also on Boston Post Road but closer to the Wayland town line. Deed research does not support a link between this property and the owners described by Lamson. Also, Lamson says the store was "on what is now the Minor property" whereas the house in question was owned by the Green family during the years when Lamson was writing his history.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that the present house at 809-811 Boston Post Road is not the first on the site. A house appears at the foot of Love Lane on the 1822 map, labeled as belonging to "T. Pierce," whose first name was Thaddeus. At some point in the mid-century

19th century, this house was replaced. The question is, who built the present mid-19th century house and barn?

Thaddeus Peirce died in 1848 at age 84 and his son Abijah inherited the property. Although it is difficult to say for sure, Abijah is the person most likely to have replaced the earlier house. When Abijah died in 1859 at age 54, his widow Mary had to sell the house and three acres to

House and Barn at 809-811 Boston Post Road. May, 2004. Photos by Pamela W. Fox

Post Road Green Development, September, 2005.
Photos by Pamela W. Fox

pay his debts (Book 825, pages 335 and 336). Perhaps Abijah's debt was in part for the construction of a new house, barn, and shop on his father's land. Unfortunately, tax records from the 1840s and 1850s are not available to provide a definitive answer.

The buyer, Luther Fuller of Wayland, purchased the three-acre parcel with buildings for $751.60 and an additional six acres directly from the widow for $748, for a total of almost $1500. In 1862, the first year that buildings are listed separately in the tax records, Fuller was taxed for a dwelling, a barn, and a "wheelwright shop." The already well-traveled Boston

Post Road would have been an excellent location for such a shop. Fuller's tax valuation increased only gradually during more than a decade of ownership, suggesting that he did not build a new, more valuable house.

In 1875, Mary E. Fuller, widow of Luther, sold the property to Edward C. Green (Book 1349/388). Green is listed in the 1887 directory as a farmer. The property stayed in the Green family for over a century. Edward and his wife Cora had a son, Edward Jr., and daughter, Cora. Edward Jr. initially worked as a farmer but was quickly swept up in the automobile age. In the 1911 and 1921 directories, Edward Jr. is listed as a chauffeur and in 1915 he is listed as a mechanic. From about 1920 to at least 1963, he operated an automobile repair garage known as Green's Garage on the premises.

In 1973, the property was sold to David Connolly, who rented rooms in the house. Tenants held frequent yard sales until town authorities were able to enforce by-laws prohibiting this practice. The condition of the property was a cause of considerable frustration for neighbors and town officials.

In 2004, Carol Seto purchased the three-acre property for $1,080,000 for a 40B development. The selectmen and members of the Planning Board and Weston Historical Commission saw this as the only possible way to preserve the historic house and barn. Because the existing buildings are sited close to the road, they partially screen the two new buildings from view.

Pamela W. Fox

One Hundred Years Ago: Weston in 1905

Selections from the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*, 1905

January 6, 1905. "The telephone service at Stony Brook is exceedingly annoying, the slot device not working properly and there being a considerable number of disputes between those who call and the central office as to the amount deposited."

January 13, 1905. "The First Parish Friendly Society will hold a poverty party Monday night at the Town Hall."

January 20, 1905. "The skating on the Coburn meadows is the best that has been for a number of years and is enjoyed by all."

February 24, 1905. "The coasting from No. 4 schoolhouse down Viles street across the railroad track is a very dangerous practice and should be stopped. If any serious accident happens no one will be to blame but the parents of the children who are allowed to do it."

March 31, 1905. "George Sanderson & Son have a beautiful display consisting of 200,000 fine pansy plants of good colors."

April 7, 1905. "Many of the children who attend District No. 4 school are sick with whooping cough. The school has been closed indefinitely."

April 21, 1905. "The 'speeding' of automobiles in the town is being stopped. It is thought that the resolution to enforce the law is diverting many automobiles to other locations."

April 28, 1905. "Many of the Weston summer residents moved from Boston during the past week."

May 12, 1905. "A wall, steps, and columns of fieldstone and concrete, forming an architectural feature of great beauty, are being constructed on the estate of Horace Sears."

May 26, 1905. "The Selectmen have very properly stopped the playing of lawn tennis at the Riverside recreation grounds and at the grounds of the Boston Athletic Association."

June 2, 1905. "The only serious drawback to Weston is the never-ending procession of automobiles, which raise so much dust that driving is not as pleasant as it once was."

June 30, 1905 "Considerable progress has been made in rebuilding the chair factory [on Crescent Street]. The walls are nearly boarded in and the roof nearly covered over."

July 28, 1905. "Steam was let into the cylinders of the engine of the reconstructed furniture factory Thursday. The plant is a well-equipped one."

September 1, 1905. "At an exhibit of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, S.W. Warren of Weston, the veteran strawberry grower, showed some Pan-Americans which were as delicious as if grown in June, and a new seedling apple, somewhat resembling an early Williams in color and taste."

September, 1905. "Guy and Bert Trask went fishing Thursday and for a while trout will be scarce around Weston."

September 22, 1905. "A touring car driven at an unlawful rate of speed, according to reports, ran into a herd of cows being driven along Central avenue."

October 13, 1905. "The Weston Water Co is extending the main along what is called Ice House road. By the way, isn't it about time the Town accepted that street and christened it with some kind of name? There are 10 houses there, an ice house and pumping station, property worth probably $30,000. How would it do to call it Sears street? That's a name that has honored Weston." [Editor's note: Warren Avenue is the name finally chosen.]

October 13, 1905. "Mr. Philip Miller, foreman for Mr. E.J. Brown, shot a large eagle last Monday. It measured five and one-half feet from tip to tip and had a large horn pout in its beak when shot. The fish was still alive."

October 20, 1905. "Mrs. Lydia Ann Garfield...was fatally burned last Saturday at her home. As nearly as can be ascertained, a spark from the kitchen range set fire to her clothing...."

November 3, 1905. "Kenney Bros. & Wolkin (sic) are putting in a 26-feet water wheel to furnish power at the Chair factory."

December 8, 1905. "Tree Warden Cooper and his men have commenced the fight with the gypsy and brown-tail moths, and it promises to be a long and costly performance."

December 8, 1905. "The stove at the Stony Brook station is being relined. One wonders why such jobs are not done in the warm weather."

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Co-Secretaries: Anna Melone
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This issue of the BULLETIN is the first since the spring of 2004, when Vera Laska gave up the editorship after ten years of dedicated work. I am pleased to take over as editor. Almost three years have passed since publication of my book *Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, Massachusetts, 1830-1980*, and I welcome the opportunity to continue exploring Weston history. In future issues, I hope to publish primary source material as well as articles and memoirs submitted by local residents or outside scholars. Please contact me if you have ideas for articles or if you would like to contribute photographs, memorabilia, or other materials that might be of interest to our readers. All such materials would be returned.

Pamela W. Fox

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THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 2004 Volume XXXV, No. 1

Pat Gowdy, Women's Community League of Weston. President, 2002-2004, and Helyn Sutherland, League's Woman of the Year 2003.

THE WOMEN'S COMMUNITY LEAGUE OF WESTON, INC.

A Brief History

This is the 85th year of **The Women's Community League of Weston, Inc.**! Since the development of their mission, "to foster the community spirit aroused originally by cooperative work during the First World War, to develop further the intellectual and social life and to help with the community needs as they arise," Weston women have contributed time, money and energy to the betterment of the town of Weston. Through their philanthropic endeavors and social activities during the past 85 years, they have worked to meet the founders' objectives.

The League began in 1919, set up headquarters in the "Yellow Barn" at 494 Boston Post Road, paid $15.00 a month rent, and opened the "Willow Plate Tea Shop" and "Food Fancywork Exchange" to raise funds for their projects. Within months the original 13 women captured the attention of the press and the interest of the town's women. Within the year, there were an Education Committee, Civics Committee, Social Committee, Art and Music Committee, Program Committee and Recreation Committee, which soon became the Welfare Committee.

Sketch of the Barn, at the Josiah Smith Tavern (Jones House), home of the League.

A rare photo of the interior view of the Willow Plate Tea Shop, 1919.

At the boutique of the Clothing Exchange, Sally Utiger (left) and Orry Costello.

Activities in front of the Barn, during the 85th year celebration.

By 1925 *The League* was furnishing milk to the Weston Public School's needy children in the four lower grades, was contributing to a needy family in town, to the Infant's [sic] and Children's Hospital, and was providing dances and dance classes for young people from ages 13 to 19. In 1929, after being requested by the School Committee and in cooperation with the Superintendent, *The League* began the hot lunch program in the Weston Schools. Over 200 students were served each day. (In 1931, the town took over the program, with the food and equipment on hand being donated to the town by *The League*.)

The League's Scholarship program began in 1930 with one $150 scholarship being given to a Weston High student each year for several years. Over the past 10 years *The League* has given $250,000 in need-based scholarships to Weston High School seniors, has given several of the major awards at graduation, each with a monetary component, and has regularly contributed to the METCO program.

The Children's Exchange began as a project by a small group of women to help the war effort in 1942 and was taken over by the town shortly thereafter under its War Economy Division of the Committee of Public Safety. *The League* assumed responsibility for it in 1945, with profits going to *The League's* Welfare and Scholarship Fund. In 1952, *The League* moved the Children's Exchange into the Jones House. Today, the Children's Exchange, now known as the **Clothing Exchange**, is in the Annex to the Jones House (Josiah Smith Tavern) and is connected to The Barn, now *The League's* headquarters for meetings and events. It sells consigned or donated fine quality and occasionally new men's, women's and children's clothing and boutique and antique items. It is open on Tuesdays from 10 to 4, and on the first Saturday of the month, from 10 to 2. Consignees and donors may bring clothing in only on Tuesdays, as Saturdays are devoted to sales.

In 1983 *The League's* **Endowment Fund** was started with two $5,000 donations, and by 1989 the Fund had reached $100,000. In the 1990's, the Fund was used to renovate the Barn, and to contribute $25,000 each to the Library and Community Center building funds. Last year it contributed $5,000 to the WCL Junior's project entitled "Youth at Risk," in order to bring noted experts on Youth issues to speak to the school community.

Today, *The League* has over 400 members actively involved in twelve **Interest Groups** (Antiques Appreciation, the Clothing Exchange, the Community League Garden Club, Empty Nesters, three International Food Groups, Juniors, Newcomers, Singles, Sociables, Weston Women Who Work), and six major **Committees** (Christmas Eve Carol Sing, an event which is open to all area residents; Community Service and Scholarship Fund; 85th Anniversary events; Hospitality; Web Site production; Woman of the Year program).

Collectively, The League provides Weston women with social, education, and philanthropic opportunities to cover all ages and interests, carrying on its mission established 85 years ago. It is an organization that is open to any and all women residents of Weston. It is an organization designed to serve the needs of Weston

Pat Gowdy

***Pat Gowdy** is **President** of WCL. She grew up in California, and is a graduate of St. Mary's College, B.A./Math, and Wayne State University, M.Ed./Math. Since she and her husband Bob, moved here from Lafayette, CA in 1990, Pat has been a member of The League. In CA, Pat was a high school teacher, a PTA President and School Board member and President; and in Weston she was a Parent Advisor at WHS, a Booster's Club President and has served in several capacities on The League's Board. Pat and Bob have three children, Ted (in CA), Matt (in NC), and Ann (in ME), two daughters-in-law, Heather and Kelli, and three grandchildren.*

CLASS BOOK OF 1938

Here is a golden treasure, all 46 pages of it, the "Class Book of 1938" of the Weston High School. In a homemade binding of golden cardboard are mementoes of 19 girls and 22 boys of the class, each person's name and photograph on a rural background with a few sentences about the young scholar's past, present and/or future hopes.

Below are their names. See if you can find among them a friend or an acquaintance, or better still, yourself. If so, please let me know by writing me a note, and we shall see how we can follow up the matter for everybody's interest.

Helen Ackerson
Harriet Batey
Elizabeth Jean Campbell
Jeanne Doris Campbell
Helene Champlain
Margaret Josephine Cronin
Mary Cutting
Mary Ruth Funderburk
Suzanne Hildebrand
Ruth Elizabeth Homond
Marcia Hobbs
Helen Russel Jacobs
Susan Kenney
Norma Isabel Kingsbury
Rosemary MacDonald
Jean Browning Noyes
Elizabeth Pooler
Dorothy Mayne Toohy
Irene Williams

Richard Ackerson
Thomas Henry Bassett
David Briggs
Hardwick Browne
Roland Bumpus
Robert "Kid" Clive
Edward Edmunds, Jr.
Delmo Ferranti
Walter "Misty" Fogg
Warren Hall
Allen Hallet
Richard Harold Kennedy
Steward MacDonald
Clement Monaco
Charles Morin
George Pierce
John Perry
Charles Poutas
Charles Stevens
Milton Theall
Albert Warren
Francis Wilson

The last too pages are like a historical bonus. One lists nine football games of 1937, every one of which Weston won. The last page is a "WHO'S WHO" of the students, pairing their names with various attributes, from "most popular" (Dot Toohy, Charlie Morin) to most likely to succeed (Mary Cutting with three others), through best athlete, musician, etc. Tennis seems to have been rather popular. There are 35 assorted listings on this page.

Please do look into your past and do get in touch with me if you hit some of the rare historical gold dust! Take also a second look at the photo of the faculty - can you identify anybody?

Vera Laska

The High School, 1937-38.

The Faculty, 1937-38.

WESTON'S COUNCIL ON AGING

In 1973 Massachusetts became the first state to have a cabinet level agency whose mission was solely the care and support of the elders, which is now called the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Although there is a council on aging (COA) and senior center in almost every city or town, they range from one to two rooms with limited funds to large facilities that offer their own meal site, adult day health center, and transportation. All Councils on Aging are municipally appointed, have volunteer advisory boards that coordinate programs and services and serve as advocates for seniors. All COAs provide information and referral, and may also offer a variety of support services such as health screenings and transportation.

The Weston Council on Aging (COA) was established in 1974 to identify the needs of town seniors and provide programs to meet these needs. During its formative years the COA office moved from the Jones House to a small room in the Brook School apartments to its current location at the Community Center on Alphabet Lane. The bulk of the Weston COA funding comes from local appropriations, but state grants, program income, individual donations, and other resources make up a substantial portion of our operating revenues. Volunteers provide extensive support to the COA.

Ann Charlesworth was the COA's first coordinator and worked five hours a week at $5 an hour. Ann, in partnership with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, developed a telephone referral service. Additionally, during the late seventies, the COA established a Keep Well Clinic conducted in collaboration with the Board of Health and the Visiting Nurses Association to provide health screenings. Weston Council on Aging members, Lyman Hayes and Katherine Helgeson, assisted in founding West Suburban Services; now known as Springwell, a social services agency which aids those 60 and over in living independently within their own home.

It provides Meals On Wheels to homebound elders delivered by community volunteers five days a week and a congregate meal site at the Community Center.

In 1984, Ruth Jones, Chairperson of the COA board, was instrumental in hiring the first program director, Myrna Rosenblatt. 1985 was also an exciting year for the Weston Council on Aging. After serving for three years a Chairperson, Ruth Jones passed her seat to Barbara Williams but continued as a board member. Senior aide Margaret Jewett edited the first newsletter, the Communiqué, published in May, which was mailed to 2300 Weston residents. FISH (Friends in Service Helping), established in 1972 through the efforts of Fran Tucker and Dick Greene of St. Peter's Church in cooperation with local churches, became a closer cooperator with the COA. FISH provides rides by volunteer drivers to Weston seniors to medical appointments. During the mid-eighties, Myrna Rosenblatt resigned and Barbara Williams hired the new director Marilyn Campbell.

Marilyn came to Weston after working at the Concord and Lexington Council on Aging as a Volunteer Coordinator and Assistant Director. Her main priorities for the Weston Council on Aging were expanding services and outreach efforts.

In 1996, Marilyn conducted a needs assessment, revealing the necessity for increased transportation services, lower real estate taxes, and a desire for more affordable, manageable housing for Weston elders. In response, Marilyn added several new programs and services, including the Veterans taxi. Utilizing town appropriations, the COA contracted with Veterans to provide taxi service for Weston seniors six days a week. Volunteer Kay McIntosh of the SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) program provided information, counseling and education regarding health insurance options for seniors.

The Weston COA experienced remarkable growth from 1987-1993. Chuck McCracken, Methodist minister, became a board member, and was later named Chairman of the Board from 1988 to 1989. Judy Knauer, Outreach Coordinator, formed an intergenerational program with Weston High School to assist volunteers. In 1989, Marilyn Campbell initiated a variety of programs including art appreciation, lectures, and theater trips, and hired a geriatric nurse to oversee the Keep Well Clinic. Ruth Jones resigned from the board but devoted her energy to developing the Friends of the Council on Aging (FCOA), the fundraising arm of the COA. The first meeting of FCOA was held at the Golden Ball Tavern, and Louise Bennett was named the President.

Shirley Earle, Outreach Coordinator, created a survey identifying the concerns of seniors in Weston over the age of 80. The results of the survey assisted the Council on Aging with long range planning and made more seniors aware of the services provided. Also at this time, FISH became the main source of transportation to medical appointments for seniors in Weston. Marilyn recruited more than 100 dedicated volunteers to assist with a wide variety of activities, including: collating newsletters, delivering meals on wheels, and running errands for homebound seniors. Marilyn advocated with town officials for the Property Tax Work-off Program now known as the Senior Service Program. This program allows low income seniors to work in town organization in exchange for a reduction in their property taxes. Additionally, Marilyn instituted monthly luncheon meetings at the COA with town manager Carl Valente and State Senator Susan Fargo. In 2000, Shirley Earle retired and Candice Steingisser became the COA's Outreach Coordinator. However, Shirley continued working for the COA part-time as a support group leader.

In 2001, the COA moved to its new location at the Community Center on Alphabet Lane. The beautiful new setting for Weston seniors was a culmination of Marilyn's sustained effort to meet the needs of seniors in the community. The new site allowed the COA to better serve the needs of individuals and small groups and accommodate a variety of diverse programs. In 2002, Kathie Strehle, chairperson, leads a talented board of 11 members.

In 2003, Linda Thompson takes over for Carol Sullivan as the Program Coordinator. Marilyn retired after 15 years of dedicated service. Patricia Parslow moved into the Director position, coming from a background in elder case management at Baypath Elder Service.

Today, The Weston Council on Aging serves all Weston residents 60 and over as well as their families with information, counsel, referrals, programs and activities. We are expanding our programs with a strong focus on personal growth and wellness. The COA sponsors frequent lectures and programs regarding health education, and holds health care screenings, weekly keep well clinics, and visits from a podiatrist. Meals are served at noon in the Senior Center every weekday, and volunteer drivers deliver Meals on Wheels to the homebound, regardless of income. Classes in strength training, Tai Chi, line dancing, and yoga are offered, as are weekly walks on Weston trails. A loan closet of medical equipment including walkers, wheelchairs, etc., is available to all residents at no charge; it also has a limited supply of baby equipment for visiting grandchildren.

Volunteers are essential to the day-to-day function of the Council on Aging, and our backbone of our organization.

Patricia Parslow

Patricia Parslow worked as Director of the Council on Aging in Weston for nine months from September 2003 to May 2004. She left to pursue other opportunities.

MY FAVORED PICTURE IN OUR ARCHIVES: A MEMENTO FROM OUR FILES, MARCH 1968

HISTORY PAPER - Harold G. Travis, president of the Weston Historical Society, accepts a research paper compiled in conjunction with the Weston History Project being carried out by Regis College students. Making the presentation is Miss Catherine Imbriglio. Looking on are Dr. Vera Laska of the History Department, supervisor of the project, and Regis College Academic Dean, Sister M. Flavia. Dr. Laska states Miss Imbriglio compiled an index card catalog of the archives located in the Town Hall of Weston. "I believe the enclosed work is a laudable contribution to the worthy cause of history, and embodies the cordial relations between Town-Gown in the historical community of Weston," commented Dr. Laska.

WESTON HISTORY

1638: First settlers in Farmer's Precinct of Weston

1713: Incorporated as tow of Weston, a farm settlement

1775: Weston men in the American Revolution

1770s-1840s: Stage coach and tavern era

1861-1865: Weston Men in the the Civil War

1850s on: Industries and railroads in farm town

Late 1800s: Estate era; "Weston . . . the Lenox of the East"

1917-1919: Weston men in World War I

1941-1945: Weston men and women in World War II

1945 and after: Boston's suburb and bedroom town

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Weston Historical Society (WHS), founded in 1963, grew out of the work and enthusiasm of more than forty Weston residents who had been organized into committees in 1962 to plan and to carry out a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the incorporation of Weston as a separate town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1713.

In the early spring of 1962 the Weston selectmen, Edward M. Dickson, Leonard Dowse and Stephen H. Tyng, appointed a 250th Anniversary Committee of five residents, with Henry W. Patterson as chairman. Other members of the committee were J. Kenneth Bennett, John H. Bishop, Erlund Field and Mrs. John L. Kronenberg. At its first meeting, the committee appointed Mrs. Raymond A. Paynter, Jr. as its secretary.

One of the key appointments was Harold G. Travis as chairman of the "I Remember When" committee. "Red" Travis was a great organizer, who recruited some very active local historians and writers for his 53 person committee, who would later help found and carry forward the Weston Historical Society. Brenton H. Dickson completed his work as chairman of a sub-committee by writing his book Once Upon a Pung. Alice Fraser and Philip F. Coburn were co-chairmen of "Memorabilia," a sub-committee that helped Phil Coburn produce his book Growing Up in Weston; Alice Fraser became the curator of the Society's collection of artifacts.

Another important chairman was Howard Gambrill, Jr., heading the committee on historic houses. With his young daughter, Betsy, now Mrs. Alfred Aydelott, and other helpers, he put together a map of Weston, showing the location of the 50 oldest houses in the town, with the names of their original owners and their original construction dates. Each house on the map was given a bronze plaque designed by Peg Kronenberg, who also created the attractive seal adopted by the Weston Historical Society.

Soon after the formal celebration ended on June 1, 1963, Howard Gambrill, Jr. formed a corporation with some friends to purchase and restore the Golden Ball Tavern on the Boston Post Road. Many of the founders of the WHS became founders and Tavern Keepers of the Golden Ball Tavern and helped Mary and Howard Gambrill, Jr. see the tavern grow into an important museum and pre-Revolutionary landmark of unusual charm.

Other important historical books and publications dealing with Weston's early history began to appear as the 250th anniversary celebration closed its activities: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts by Brenton H. Dickson and Homer C. Lucas (Weston, MA: WHS, 1976) and Random Recollections by Brenton H. Dickson (Weston, MA: by the author, 1977). Vera Laska's column in the Town Criers for Weston, Wayland and Sudbury, "An American History Reader," also contained items on Weston history.

The first annual meeting of the WHS was held in the Weston Town Hall on November 10, 1964, with Stephen T. Riley of Weston as the principal speaker. Steve Riley was then the Director of the prestigious Massachusetts Historical Society and was later to serve the WHS as its president.

Harold "Red" G. Travis was our first president. Included in the first Board of Directors were J. Kenneth Bennett, John G. Brooks, Brenton H. Dickson, III, Erlund Field, Grant M. Palmer, Jr., Henry W. Patterson, Mrs. Homer N. Sweet, Harold G. Travis, Wilmot Whitney and Harold B. Willis, Jr. The Society started with a list of 650 members; the annual dues were $2.00 per person and $200.00 for life memberships. Harry B. Jones was the first Treasurer, and Mrs. William G. Burt, Jr. was the first Bulletin editor.

On Monday, April 19, 1965, the Society celebrated the 190th anniversary of the day on which one hundred men and three officers in Colonel Samuel Lamson's Militia Company, as well as eleven men and three officers in Captain Israel Whittemore's Militia Company of Artillery marched from the Weston center to meet the British in Lexington in 1775. The day was celebrated with a pageant, a walk over the Lamson Hill portion of the soldiers' march, and an open house at the Josiah Smith Tavern.

In January of 1966 President Travis completed an agreement with Weston's selectmen, whereby the WHS assumed responsibility for the custody of the historic Isaac Fiske Law Office on the Boston Post Road. The Law Office was built about 1800 by Artemus Ward. It was similar in design and construction to the few remaining 18th century country law offices in Massachusetts and in Connecticut, except for an added living area, visible only from the south garden. For thirty-one years the Society made major and minor repairs on this historic building before returning it to the custody of the town.

A note in the January 1967 issue of the Bulletin tells us that Brenton H. Dickson addressed our annual meeting, sharing the results of his research on the Middlesex Canal. A taped recording of his speech was given to the Department of History of the Weston High School. In the same Bulletin was a note referring to the book Puritan's Progress, written in 1931 by Arthur Train, which relates to Weston's early history. A copy of this book was given to the Weston Public Library.

In 1967 Dr. Vera Laska, a new member of the WHS, professor of American History at Regis College in Weston, announced the launching of the "Weston History Project," that during five years recorded topically our town's history. In March, 1967 the Society's rooms in the Josiah Smith Tavern were opened on a scheduled basis.

On March 25, 1968 the Town Meeting voted favorably on a motion proposed by the directors of the WHS to establish a Weston Historical Commission, authorized under Section 8D, Chapter 697 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to protect historic sites and buildings from land takings in Weston in the absence of a special act of the state legislature.

On August 15, 1968 Mrs. Howard Forbes made colored photographs of the limb by limb dismantling of the Burgoyne Elm and gave them to the WHS collection of photographs. That year annual dues were raised to $3.00 per person and $5.00 per family; the WHS gained 67 new members. In 1969 the charge for the sixth Charter Anniversary Dinner was $3.50 per person.

On October 26, 1971 Edward W. Marshall became president of the WHS. In 1972 Mr. Edwin B. Sears, Ed Marshall's neighbor on Crescent Street, joined the Society; upon his death many years later, he bequeathed to it $10,000. Mrs. John W. Scott, a charter member, also left a bequest in her will of $10,000 to the Society's growing Endowment Fund.

In 1972 a much needed index to Lamson's History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630-1890 (1913) was prepared under the "Weston History Project" at Regis College as part of the Bicentennial, by history major Patricia MacDonald working under the supervision of Dr. Laska. The WHS participated in a series of activities celebrating the country's Bicentennial of the American Revolution. Parades, the dedication of parks and monuments and tree plantings continued in 1976 and 1977.

In 1977 Stephen T. Riley was elected WHS president. In 1978 Miss Anna Hall died at the age of 102. She was a charter member of the WHS and the town's oldest resident. In her will she bequeathed to the Society the fine 1884 painting of the Hastings farmhouse on North Avenue by the well known landscape painter John J. Enneking; it now hangs in the office of the selectmen.

Harold G. Travis died at the age of 83 in 1981; he had successfully completed 18 years of creative work as president, editor of the Bulletin and as director of our organization. It was my privilege to know him since 1941, when he recruited me to work with him for the Weston Boy Scouts, later on school problems and in a successful effort to save Lamson Park. The function of the editor of the Bulletin was taken over consecutively by Donald G. Kennedy, Lee Marsh and since 1994 by Vera Laska, who had served previously as president from 1984 to 1986. With Alice Fraser in charge of the WHS artifacts collection, we had the three most important functions of the Society filled by three very effective and able women. Mrs. Victor Harnish continued to organize our Charter Anniversary Dinners, with Mrs. George Pink and other helpers.

On June 18, 1988 the town of Weston celebrated its 275th anniversary with Edward M. Dickson in charge of the ceremonies. Jeannette Cheek addressed the meeting at the Town Hall, and her speech was fully reported in the December, 1988 Bulletin.

Recent presidents of the WHS were John Hodges (1987-88), Julie Hines (1988-92), Frederick Crafts, III (1992-93), Sabra Jones (1993-95), Lee Marsh (1995-97), and Joseph P. Sheehan, Jr. (1997-).

Dr. Vera Laska took over as curator of the Museum in 1991 and organized the Society's collections under Documents, Photographs, Books and Artifacts, cataloguing each item with the aid of volunteers. The scattered books are now lined up under sections dealing with Weston, New England, Other, and Technical. Four new exhibit cases joined the previous single one, presenting selected artifacts to visitors. A charming 19th century room offers a view of the recent past. In 1994 Laska also became the editor of the Bulletin, after two moribund years of that publication. She wrote a new Preface to the 1997 reprinted Lamson History, which now contains the much needed Index, prepared in 1972 as part of the "Weston History Project".

In the fall of 1997, Laska suggested the ambitious project WESTON 2000, PORTRAIT OF A TOWN, which the Board of Directors unanimously approved.

We now move forward into the next century under the leadership of Joseph P. Sheehan, Jr. with the following officers of the WHS: vice president Vera Laska, secretary J. Kenneth Bennett (since 1984), treasurer Harold Downing (since 1989), and directors George Amadon, J. Kenneth Bennett, Barbara Coburn, Pamela Fox, Douglas Henderson, Vera Laska, Lee Marsh, William Martin and Anna Malone.

It is our fervent hope that the Weston Historical Society will continue to flourish under the leadership of following generations and keep our town's past alive for the future.

J. Kenneth Bennett

J. Kenneth Bennett was secretary of the WHS from 1984 to 2000. His above article is a reprint from the archival book, unpublished, that had been prepared for the WESTON 2000 - PORTRAIT OF A TOWN in celebration of the bicentennial. The article is the best and unique summary of the WHS history.

HISTORY MARCHES ON: HOW DID WE SURVIVE?

Looking back, its hard to believe that we have lived as long as we have. As children we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pickup truck on a warm day was always a special treat. Our baby cribs were painted with bright colored lead based paint. We often chewed on the crib, ingesting the paint.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors, or cabinets. And when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets. We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. We played dodge ball and sometimes the ball would really hurt. We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank sugar soda, but we were never over weight; we were always outside playing. Little League had tryouts, and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment.

Some students weren't as smart as others or didn't work hard so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. That generation produced some of the greatest risk-takers and problem solvers.

We had the freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we somehow learned to deal with it all.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Why is the man who invests your money called a broker?

Why do croutons come in airtight packages?
Aren't they just stale bread to begin with?

When cheese gets its picture taken, what does it say?

Why are wise men and wise guys opposites?

Why do overlook and oversee mean opposite things?

"I am" is reportedly the shortest sentence in English;
could it be that "I do" is the longest sentence?

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

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This Spring 2004 issue of the BULLETIN is the last one under my editorship, which I had to resign for health reasons. I thank all my faithful readers for their moral help, for their encouragements and for their support during the ten years of my editorship.

Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 2003 Volume XXXIV, No. 1

Land's Sake Executive Director Stephen Cyr bottling Weston's own maple syrup.

MAPLE SUGARING: A CONTINUING TRADITION IN WESTON

Around mid-February, the woods and roadsides of Weston become busy worksites for Land's Sake and Middle School students participating in the annual Maple Sugar Project. They tap trees, haul buckets, stoke the fire in the sugar shack, and boil sap in a tradition that has not changed much, excepting some technological advances, since early settlers arrived in the northeast.

Inevitably the students gain a deeper appreciation for the tree that made an entire industry possible. *Acer saccharum*, the sugar maple, is native only to the northeastern United States and Canada, making maple sugaring a source of pride in the region. It is a hearty, patient tree, often waiting for years in the shade of other trees for a chance of sunlight. Individual trees have been known to grow as tall as 135 feet and up to seven feet in diameter; they often dominate the forest canopy when they reach maturity. They can withstand extreme cold, fierce winds, and even small fires. The sugar maple's durable wood has been coveted for railway cars, carriage spokes, indestructible spools and bobbins in the old-time mills, dance floors, violins, and bowling lanes. The trees managed in sugarbushes have the ability like no other, except perhaps the black maple (*acer nigrum*), to give sap plentifully year after year. Other tapable trees include the red maple (*acer rubrum*), silver maple (*acer saccharinum*), and the Norway maple (*acer plantanoides*), although their sap is not as sweet or bountiful.

Weston's middle schoolers tap the trees with care, aware that they must preserve the tree's health. They start the season with a "tapping out" event in mid-February, when warmer days are followed by freezing nights. It is the positive and negative pressures that build up within the tree due to the temperature changes that allow the sap to "run" when the trees are tapped. Students tap only those trees that are ten inches in diameter or wider and limit the number of taps per tree depending on its size. Using a "brace and bit" similar to what farmers used a hundred years ago, they drill a small hole in the tree at a slightly upward angle, careful to leave at least six inches between old and new holes. Small, neat holes allow the tree to properly heal over once the spout is removed. The hole is plugged with a hooked metal spout, upon which a metal bucket is hung and topped with a pointed or rounded lid to keep debris from tainting the precious sap. Weather permitting, sap is collected almost every day, and when enough is collected for a batch, it is boiled into syrup.

The discovery of the sugar maple's sweet sap is bound up in mythology, native oral traditions, and early settlers' stories. One Canadian story claims that the first-ever harvester was a common red squirrel which with sharp teeth hopped from tree to tree puncturing the wood. The sap quickly hardened on the bark, and the squirrel then returned to nibble the droplets with relish. Despite conflicting stories, it is widely believed that tribes such as the Abenaki, Iroquois, Huron, Ojibway, Micmac and others in the region first taught the settlers how to collect and condense sap into a thicker, sweeter substance. Indians would put a gash in the tree and insert spouts made of birch bark, elderberry or sumac branches to collect the sap into birch bowls placed on the ground. They would collect the sap in a hollowed out log and boil it by submerging hot stones from the fire. They would also let the sap freeze, remove the ice, and collect the condensed syrup underneath.

Around 1800, colonists replaced the gashes with neater holes tapped by augers, believed to be a first sign of their stewardship for the trees. They developed hooked spouts from which they hung wooden buckets and then transported full buckets hung from shoulder yokes. Different sized yokes were constructed for men, women and children. Sap was boiled in open cauldrons hung on poles or tripods over an open fire. The first syrup was dark and

strong, and was used as a sweetener or food preservative in the homes, or sold or bartered for other goods.

Maple syrup became an important symbol of self-reliance around the American Revolution, and colonist were encouraged to shun the more expensive, rare cane sugar bought from England. Evaporators, invented in the 1850s, sped up the sap boiling process significantly and encouraged more production. One of the earliest models was patented by D.M. Cook of Ohio in 1858. Evaporators worked by heating the sap in shallow, closed metal pans. Later models added grooves and ridges to the pan bottoms to increase surface area, and a flue that drained partially concentrated sap into a flat finishing pan. This is essentially the same system that Land's Sake uses in the sugar shack at Weston Middle School today.

Around the turn of the century, sugar shacks began popping up to shelter both the sap and the syrup-maker. "Sugar packers" stored the syrup in bulk, often by transforming it into large sugar cakes that were sold to flavor foods and tobaccos. Maple was, and still is, popular for making canned baked beans, candy, maple-flavored cereals, salad dressing, barbeque sauces, aromatic pipe tobacco, and of course, as a topping for pancakes and French toast. Thomas Jefferson's enthusiastic attempt to start a sugar bush at his estate failed. Virginia was too far south to provide the seasonal freeze-thaw that is critical to sap collection.

American Abbot Augustus was one of the first men to transform the maple sugaring craft into a major business enterprise. He used metal pipes (an early version of tubing systems widely used today) to move sap from 10,000 trees on his farm in eastern New York. At the peak of his business, Augustus was producing 20,000 gallons of syrup annually.

The demand for maple sugar declined further after the civil war, when cane sugar became cheaper to purchase and transport. Therefore, producers shifted their marketing of maple as an all-purpose sweetener and preservative to strictly syrup, where its popularity remains today.

There is growing concern that acid rain is causing irreversible damage to sugar maples; it is believed that the highly acidic rain falling on sugarbushes drastically increases the speed at which potassium, a critical nutrient, leaches out of the soil. Also, compaction and road salt is taking its toll on the trees planted along roads, and many of these older specimens are dying. Weston is seeing effects of these stresses on its own trees. *The Town of Weston Maple Sugar Inventory*, conducted in 1992, made the following recommendations to preserve the trees as much as possible: rely on younger sugarbushes for maple sugaring more heavily than the older roadside trees, restrict development around these sugarbushes, and possibly plant more sugar maples along secondary streets with less traffic and little or no road salt application. Steps will need to be taken across the northeast to assure the survival of the trees as well as the craft of maple sugaring

Despite some decline in the past fifty years, the sugaring industry is still strong, comprising full- and part-time producers. They put an emphasis on grading to assure customer acceptance. Syrup is graded according to its color: Grade A Light or "Fancy," Grade A Medium, Grade A Dark, and Grade B, which is very dark with a strong, mapley flavor.

In Weston, middle schoolers learn the art of syrup-making. They must get the sap in the evaporator to a temperature of 219 degrees, versus the 212 degrees it takes to boil water. The evaporator will turn forty gallons of sap, with an average 2.5 percent sugar content, to one gallon of syrup with a sugar content of 67 percent, and a net weight of eleven pounds per gallon. Students work hard as long as the sap is running, then bottle the syrup according to grade, and prepare themselves for the Sugaring Off Festival in late March. In true New England tradition, spring-seeking folk come out to the sugar shack to get a hint of the warmth

Land's Sakes sugar shack behind the Middle School.

A wood fire evaporator inside the sugar shack.

Steve Cyr filtering the finished product.

Preparing to bottle the syrup.

to come, see a demonstration of the sugaring process, and purchase the long-awaited syrup. With their first taste of that unique sweetness comes the knowledge of being part of a cherished tradition of local, sustainable business with deep roots in the land.

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Stephen Cyr

Stephen Cyr, Executive Director of Land's Sake, graduated with a Bachelor of Sciences in Forest and Wildlife Management degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in 1993. He has since worked with a number of conservation commissions, town forest boards, and private land owners dealing with a wide range of land management issues. He joined Land's Sake in 1994 and has directed the organization since October 1999. He is married and has a four month old daughter.

THE MAPLE SUGAR PROJECT

A time capsule dated 1974 still remains buried in the stoop of the old sugar shack behind Weston's Middle School. It is here where, since incorporating in 1980, Land's Sake has run the "Maple Sugar Project" each spring. The Maple Sugar Project is an after-school program designed to introduce students to the traditional craft of making syrup from the sap of the sugar maple tree. This hands on, outdoor, educational experience is open to all Weston Middle School students. The students learn to identify and tap sugar maple trees, gather sap, boil and bottle syrup, as well as brush up on all life's sciences. Botanist, chemist, and craftsman are just a few of the hats worn by a sugarmaker. This year's "Tap Out" was scheduled for Saturday, February 8th at 9:00 am. The annual end of the season "Sugaring Off" event is scheduled for Saturday, March 29th from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Land's Sake runs the program with financial support from the Weston Conservation Commission.

Land's Sake, Inc. is a non-profit organization with a mission to engage the community in its own working landscape. Programs include all aspects of community agriculture-Maple Sugaring, Logging and Lumbering, Conservation Land Management, Trail Maintenance, Beekeeping, and Organic Vegetable Production. Over 80 percent of program costs are covered by the sale of the products and services themselves, the other 20 percent is covered through membership dues and private donations. A donation to Land's Sake goes a long way. *Land's Sake*: an old expression with new meaning: Let's take care of our land, for *Land's Sake*.

Kerisa Perazella

Kerisa Perazella is Assistant Farm Manager with Land's Sake, Inc. She graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Writing and Communication from Emerson College in May of 1998. She has worked with Land's Sake since April 2001.

Mike Raymond is the Farm Manager. He graduated with a Bachelor of Sciences in Resource Economics from the University of Vermont in 1991. He has both assisted and managed a number of different vegetable farming operations around New England over the past 10 years; he has managed the Land's Sake Farm since April of 2000.

LONG, LONG AGO . . . IN WESTON

Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mosher, I gained the privilege to look into three interesting scrap books, kept throughout the years by Margaret Mosher, the well known and beloved librarian of the town of Weston for many years. Two of the scrap books are green and measure 11 x 12 inches, the third one is in dark covers and measures 8 x 10 1/2 inches. All three are chock full of information, a treasure trove of Weston history. Unfortunately, like many of similar amateur collections, many entries, consisting of various clippings, do not contain either the date or the name of the source, or both, which - to put it mildly - chagrins the researcher. The dates covered by the scrapbooks are, as far as I could ascertain from initial perusal, 1915 to 1978, 1965 to 1983 and 1921 to 1976, that is overlapping dates, but I could not detect any criterion for the differences; the smaller scrap book perhaps contains mostly wedding announcements and obituaries.

Here are a few samples extracted randomly from the headlines of the clippings, that just might whet your appetite for digging deeper into some of the topics:

From the first larger scrapbook:

"Shame of the Town of Weston," headlined the Sunday Boston American on February 21, 1915, and offered a brief explanation before a long article, stating among others that "State Orphans. . . are compelled to Walk to School While Other Children Ride at Town's Expense." There are lots of possibilities for further research; first of all, what were several (how many?) orphans doing in Weston? Who were they? Who decided that they should reside in Weston? Who paid for them? Who decided that they could not ride to school as the other Weston kids? Where did they live? And how true and accurate were the statements in the article? Was there a political motive? These are just a few questions listed here at random; many more would come up in further research.

Another interesting item was reported, most likely in the Town Crier, judging from the type of the print, with pictures, no less, about a donkey basketball game, I kid you not, where Weston and Wayland high school students battled it out while sitting on donkeys; sorry to report that Weston lost 16 to 12. Was this the fashion in general in those days, in the month of April, 1965? There must be eye witnesses still around who observed that strange variation of a polo match!

There is an extensive article, probably from the Town Crier, from the year of 1966, about a piano shaped back porch, in the Weston home of Arthur McKenzie, the concert pianist and composer. Why not? Liberace had a piano shaped swimming pool, if I recall correctly, so why not a piano shaped porch for a true artist?

In a more serious vein, here are some salaries from the good old days and not so long ago, really: in 1969 the salary of the superintendent of schools was $25,000; of the high school principal $22,000; and of the elementary school principal $19,000; so reported the Town Crier on July 29, 1971.

The Waltham News Tribune on August 23, 1977 reported in great detail the story of the Weston airport, on the corner of Brown and Winter Streets.

These clippings, and there must be several hundreds of them, come from many different sources, mostly contemporary newspapers, especially the Town Crier, but also from local organizations' announcements. Represented are the Middlesex News, Boston Herald, Boston Globe, News Tribune, and - alas - some are not identified.

The second scrap book also contains some provocative and tempting entries including attractive photographs of old houses in Weston. There is a charming picture of our own secretary Anne Melone Pollock with her husband Bob on their honeymoon in Amsterdam,

memorialized in the Town Crier on June 16, 1966. For some reason this was so important to Miss Mosher that she has a copy in both scrap books. It is also charming to see the young edition of the face of the popular Doug Henderson, most likely just out of his ambassadorial elegance, as a candidate for Weston selectman in 1978.

There are also interesting financial figures that will arise nostalgia in many a reader: reporter Irma Stowbridge stated, probably in the Town Crier, in January, 1966 (no day indicated) that the cost of a new library - a big issue of the day! - would be $450,000; alas, the clipping is incomplete. I recall a town meeting in those days, when the town was just about split on the issue of a new library, that a resident got up and in a quivering voice prophetically said: "Mind my words, if we do not build this library now, years from now it will cost us twice that amount." Truer words have been seldom spoken. How many millions did the new library cost? Much more than twice the $450,000.

Would you believe that according to a news item of December, 1980 house sales in Weston averaged $155,000? Or that as of November 19th, 1981 the tax rate was set at $17.36?

The smaller scrap book will tell you that in 1952, 38 young scholars were awarded their high school diplomas on June 7th. Another intimate news tidbit, also by reporter Irma Stowbridge, let us in on the secret that "The Golden Ball 'Privy' [is a] Likely Treasure Box," this in the Weston Town Crier on April 8, 1965. There is a flyer announcing the start of METCO, dated simply Summer, 1965. We also read about a suicide of a 14 year old girl and a 17 year old boy from high school, including their names; with this entry there is no date, but it happened during the tenure of police chief Frank Shaw.

All together there are several dozens of items that would deserve further investigation. It is only hoped that some of the readers would be challenged sufficiently to undertake the detective work.

The albums are the property of the Mosher family and are in their possession; you need their permission to work with the scrap books. We at the museum archives of the Weston Historical Society can only hope that when the time comes that the family Mosher would choose to dispose of the scrap books, that they would find their way to our archives.

Vera Laska

MORE ABOUT OUR BICENTENNIAL QUILT

The Weston School News of November, 1976 - courtesy of the Margaret Mosher scrap book - gives us details on its front page about the Bicentennial quilt that serves as a divider in our museum between one of the two exhibit rooms and the work room. Entitled "5th Graders sew Historical Quilt," it states: "A Bicentennial Quilt sewn by Woodland 5th graders has been presented to the Weston Historical Society . . . at the Josiah Smith Tavern. Mrs. Jane Marshall supervised the project in which students designed and sewed 4" x 4" muslin squares . . . with patriotic symbols, which were sewn together with alternating patches of blue and red. Diane Santos made the presentation . . . Mrs. Alice Fraser coordinated the students and mothers who produced the final project."

THE BRITISH SPY UNMASKED

In 1827 the large publishing house of Luther Roby, Printer, of Concord, New Hampshire, publisher of children's books and one of the largest printers of the Bible, released *A Journal kept by Mr. John Howe, while he was employed as a British Spy, during the Revolutionary War; also while he was engaged in the Smuggling Business, during the late War* (War of 1812).

Here is the alleged historical background of the story: British general Thomas Gage wanted to determine the lay of the land and the possibility of an incursion into either Concord or Worcester, in order to destroy military stores held there by the Patriots. He therefore ordered on April 5, 1775 Sgt. John Howe and Col. Smith (who later would command the British forces marching to Concord) to travel in disguise as countrymen with a kerchief around their necks, a small bundle in one hand and a walking stick in the other, to the Concord and Worcester area.

The following is a literal excerpt from the Howe journal, in its original spelling, allegedly the testimony of this british spy, taken from the Roby edition (pp. 6-11):

> We got to Watertown [Roby mistakenly printed Worcester!] about six miles; here we called for breakfast at the tavern; while at breakfast, there came in a negro woman to wait on the table; Col. Smith asked her where we two could find employment; she looked Col. Smith in the face, and said, Smith, you will find employment enough for you and all Gen. Gage's men in a few months. This conversation about wound up our breakfast. Smith appeared to be thurnder-struck, and my feelings were of the keenest kind . . . . the Landlord then /said/, that she had been living in Boston, and had got acquainted with a great many British officers and soldiers there, and might take you to be some of them. Then we paid our reckoning as soon as possible . . . . I told Smith that for us to go on any farther together would be imprudent; Smith said he thought so, and would return back to Boston, if I would pursue the route; he then gave me up the journal book and pencil, and ten guineas, with several letters to tories between Boston and Worcester. Smith said if he came out with his regiment that read, he would kill that wench. . . . .
>
> I asked this negro [I met] how far it was to a tavern; he said one mile to a tavern by Weston meeting house, another tavern half a mile above. I asked him which was the best and what their names were; he said the first was kep by Mr. Joel Smith, a good tavern and a good liberty man; the other was kept by Capt. Isaac Jones, a wicked tory, where a great many British officers go from Boston to his house . . . .
>
> [I] came to Smith's tavern, where two teamsters were tackling their teams . . . . one of them . . . answered, and said he did not know of any body that wanted to hire Englishmen, for they believed I was an Englishman. I asked them what reason they had for thinking so; they said I looked like them rascals they see in Boston, here I wished myself at Capt. Jones', but to start off then I thought it would not do, so I walked into the house, called for some rum and molasses, one of them followed me in and told the landlord he guessed I was a British Spy, ... The landlord told me he believed Capt. Jones would hire; I asked him where he lived; he said about half a mile above, and kept tavern at the sign of the golden ball . . . . I now went on to Capt. Jones', here I handed a letter to Capt. Jones from General Gage . . . . Then I made him acquainted with all that had taken place from Boston here, it being fourteen miles. He informed me that it would not do for me to stay over night, for his house would be mobed and I should be taken. Here I got some dinner; then he said he would send his hired man with me to the house of one Wheaton, in a remote part of the town, where I must remain till he sent for me after dinner. . . . . I arrived at Mr. Wheaton's

A

JOURNAL

KEPT BY

MR. JOHN HOWE,

WHILE HE WAS EMPLOYED AS A

BRITISH SPY,

DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR;

ALSO,

WHILE HE WAS ENGAGED IN THE

SMUGGLING BUSINESS,

DURING THE LATE WAR.

CONCORD, N. H.

LUTHER ROBY, PRINTER.

1827.

Title page of the allegedly spurious journal of John Howe

about sunset. Then the hired man informed Mr. Wheaton of my business, and that I was a British Spy, and Capt. Jones wished him to keep me secure until he sent for me. Then I was conducted into a chamber, with a table furnished with a bottle of brandy, candles, paper, etc. Now I went to work to copy from my head on a journal . . . I remained here all night; the next day being 6th, the good hired man came to see me early in the morning. He informed me that the news of the conversation which took place at Watertown between Col. Smith and a black woman reached Capt. Jones last evening, by the same teamsters you saw at J. Smith's tavern yesterday. They insisted that there were British Spies in the house, the news spread, and by eleven o'clock there were thirty men collected. Capt. Jones gave them leave to search the house, which they did in part; then they went into the kitchen and asked the black woman if there were any strangers or Englishmen in the house; she replied she thought not; . . . . By this time their fury was subsided, Capt. Jones set on a bottle of spirit to drink, which they drank, and all retired.– Now the hired man went home, and said he should call again in the evening; after breakfast I went to work upon my journal, here I sat down the number of militia, arms and ammunition of this place sent to me by the hired man from Mr. Jones – after dinner Mr. Wheaton introduced his two daughters to me, stating to them that I was a British Officer in disguise. Here we sat and played cards until tea time. After tea the ladies retired and I lie down, being very tired, and expected company that evening. About eight o'clock the hired man called for me and said he was going with me to Marlborough, but said we could not go by Capt. Jones' for they were lying in wait for me there; so I bid Mr. Wheaton and his family good bye, and off we set on the back road, coming out above Capt. Jones' one mile, on the Worcester road . . . .

There are thirty-three additional pages in the pamphlet that is Howe's journal; they deal with events that occurred beyond Weston; of interest is the entry that Howe recommended to Gen. Gage to send 500 mounted troops to Concord during night time in order to achieve victory, but that Gen. Gage did not follow up his recommendation.

The story of John Howe, the "British Spy," was highly popular and often repeated. It was not until 1983, when Greenwood Press published *American Writers Before 1800* that John Howe's figure was considered "elusive." Yet many sources before that repeated the Howe story as authentic, among them Daniel Lamson's *History of the Town of Weston* (1913), Emma Ripley's *Weston, A Puritan Town* (1961) and Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas's *One Town in the American Revolution* (1976), and many others. The story was also popular among its contemporaries who subscribed to Revolutionary nostalgia, half a century after the Revolution.

So it went until a literary bombshell hit the British spy story and sent shockwaves through the New England historical community. Daniel E. Williams, a young man who had just received his PhD. and was anxious to become published, was given an opportunity in the *Eighteenth Century* magazine; his article came out in volume 34, no.3, on June 3, 1993.

The article was titled "Spacious Spy: The Narrative Lives - and Lies - of Mr. John Howe." Williams claimed that there never was a John Howe as a spy, that the copy of his journal was imaginatively written by Mr. Roby, the printer of Concord, New Hampshire, the publisher of the Howe pamphlet, and that the journal was a literary hoax.

Williams has done a carefully researched article which leaves no doubt that Sgt. John Howe existed only as a narrator's imagination. Howe's journal told a story that created its own reality. The locations, people and events seemed a match with another journal. It followed closely the report of the activities of one ensign DeBerniere and a captain Brown, who at the end of February, 1775 were ordered by General Gage thus: "You will go through

GENERAL GAGE'S

INSTRUCTIONS,

Of 22d *February* 1775.

To Captain *Brown* and Enſign *D'Bernicre*, (of the army under his command) whom he ordered to take a ſketch of the roads, paſſes, heights, &c. from *Boſton* to *Worceſter*, and to make other obſervations:

With a *curious*

NARRATIVE

Of OCCURRENCES during their miſſion, Wrote by the *Enſign*.

Together with an ACCOUNT of their doings, in conſequence of further Orders and Inſtructions from General *Gage*, of the 20th *March* following, to proceed to *Concord*, to reconnoitre and find out the ſtate of the provincial magazines; what number of cannon, &c. they have, and in what condition.

ALSO,

An ACCOUNT of the Tranſactions of the *Britiſh* troops, from the time they marched out of *Boſton*, on the evening of the 18th, 'till their *confuſed* retreat back, on the *ever memorable Nineteenth of April* 1775; and a Return of their killed, wounded and miſſing on that *auſpicious day*, as made to Gen. *Gage*.

[Loſt in town by a *Britiſh* Officer previous to the evacuation of it by the enemy, and now printed for the information and amuſement of the *curious*.]

BOSTON

Printed, and to be ſold, by J. GILL, in Court Street. 1779.

Title page of General Gage's Instructions

the counties of Suffolk and Worcester, taking a sketch of the country as you pass; . . . . mark out the roads and distances from town to town, ... all passes must be particularly laid down, noticing the length and breaths of them, the entrance in and going out of them, and whether to be avoided by taking other routs. The rivers also to be sketched out" (p. 1 of *General Gage's Instructions*).

DeBerniere and Brown dressed simply in civilian clothes and claimed to be surveyors; later they claimed to be gentlemen of Boston who were taking a trip to Worcester. They spent the night at the Golden Ball in Weston, then continued to Worcester. On their return to Weston they met mounted men who questioned them closely and then left them. They took a different road from the one that they had been on; at the onset of a severe blizzard they were able to walk through the snow without any interference to reach safety. They returned to the Golden Ball without any problems, then had their man take their finished sketches to Boston. The following morning after breakfast they returned to Boston in very bad weather, which probably kept them from being observed by the Liberty Men. They arrived safely in Boston at about twelve o'clock and met General Gage and General Heldimen with their aid-de-camps, who did not know them until they "discovered" themselves.

The journal of John Howe pretty much followed the events experienced by DeBerniere and Brown.

SOURCES:

A journal kept by Mr. John Howe, while he was employed as a British Spy, During the Revolutionary War; also, While he was engaged in the Smuggling Business, During the Late War. Concord, N.H.: Luther Roby, Printer, 1827.

General Gage's Instructions of 22nd February, 1775, to Captain Brown and Ensign D'Berniere . . . . whom he ordered to take a sketch of the roads, passes, heights, etc. from Boston to Worcester . . . . Boston: J. Gill, 1779.

Williams, Daniel E. "Specious Spy: The Narrative Lives - and Lies - of Mr. John Howe." Boston: *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 34, no. 3, 1993.

Interviews or correspondence:

Bostonian Society, Sylvia Weedman, John Bell
Boston Public Library, Rare Book Section
Concord Library, Leslie P. Wilson
Massachusetts Historical Society, Nicholas Graham
Minuteman National Historic Park, Concord, MA, Mark Nichipor
Museum of Hoaxes, San Diego, CA, Alex Boese
New Hampshire Historical Society, William Coopley
Public Record Office, National Archives, London, England
Weston Public Library, Tatanya Flannery

George F. Amadon

Strong circumstantial evidence seems to support Williams's and Amadon's conclusion. Ed.

WESTON, NEAR CREWE, CHESHIRE, ENGLAND

Long ago and far away . . . a kind soul by the name of J.A. Paddington, Clerk to the Weston Parish Council in the Weston, Near Crewe, in Cheshire, England, sat down to his typewriter on Easter Sunday, April 14th, 1963, and sent greetings "To Our Friends of the Township of Weston, Massachusetts, U.S.A." The letter is attached to the inside cover of a small photograph album, 6" by 71/2" in green covers; on its 38 pages it offers the viewer various vistas of the English Weston and some of the people who live there.

The album is in its own little box, but there is no correspondence antedating the Paddington letter, nor is there any follow up. It can be only surmised from reading in between the lines that somebody from the American Weston wrote to several Westons abroad at the time of the 250th anniversary celebrations in the American Weston, making contact and inviting representatives of the other Westons to come and join us in the jubilee. Representatives of the English Weston would have liked to come and participate in the festivities, but it could not be, as "we are just ordinary folk, the expense would be too great."

Here is the full letter, signed by eight members of the Parish Council:

> We have much delight in forwarding you an Album of the interesting sights of the English village of Weston, which borders the great railway centre of Crewe, in the county of Cheshire, where some of the life-line of British railways converge. In the railway workshops here was built the wonderful steam locomotive, 'Royal Scot,' which toured your country in 1933, thirty years ago in April, including your capital city, BOSTON [sic].
>
> In presenting these views of our village, we feel that they will convey to you all a more interesting knowledge of our life and colour than newsprint, or letter, and we sincerely trust they will help to promote a mutual friendship between the two Weston's [sic] so many thousands of miles apart. We have a Friendly Society motto here - 'Friendship, Love and Truth,' similar to your 'Household of Ruth' Societies in the States, and we present this sentiment to you to make closer the bonds of our future friendship.

What follows are photos, starting with the eight dignitaries of the Parish Council, followed by various views of Weston town, All Saints Church, the White Lion Inn, converted from its original farm house of 1652, also a nice snapshot of six residents partaking of liquid refreshments at the same, with the caption "Sunday noon 'At the Bar'" with the names of some of the regulars. Interestingly, their photo of the Village Green shows no green but a paved road, quite a difference from our Green or Common. There are warm informal pictures of guests at the White Lion Inn's presentation of prizes at the Fishing Match, another of the Annual Garden Party & Gala with the new Queen and her retinue, showing a smiling young lady with a crown and five of her attendants. That event also presented Scotish dancers. The last photo in the album shows the team of the Weston Cricket Club, Champions of the local Scot Hay & District in 1932, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958; the dozen men in white uniform look quite handsome; no wonder, their Cricket Club has been in existence for over a century, and the team won many a game.

The last two pages are devoted to a typed history of the town and life in it. There is no mention of a date for the founding of the town; however, "At the time of the English Domesday Book (1086), the village of Weston was in the possession of Earl Harold," so it has a history much older than the New World Weston. Life seems to be centered around the church, dedicated to All Saints, erected in 1840 on the Village Green; a Sanctuary was added in 1894 and an organ in 1906. "Community life as it is today, started with the erection of the All Saints Church, and the village has altered little in the past 120 years." What a fortunate statement and fortunate people!

The question now is this: should we pick up the long interrupted connection with the English Weston, or let the matter rest where it is? Do I hear a volunteer who would like to pursue the correspondence for us?

Vera Laska

Cathleen Daley

INTRODUCING: CATHLEEN DALEY

Cathleen Daley was born in Buffalo, New York. She studied at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, where she received the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of Museum of Fine Arts.

She has functioned successfully as a freelance graphic designer for many years in Boston.

She is married to Frederick Daley, and they have a daughter Margaret. The family resides in Weston.

Cathleen Daley is the newest member of the Weston Historical Society Board of Directors. Welcome aboard!

DID YOU KNOW?

The January 29, 2003, p. B7 Boston Globe published rather intimate financial statistics about the moneys flowing from the Commonwealth to the towns. Here are the figures for Weston for fiscal year 2002; from the total state aid of $5.1 billion to all cities and towns in Massachusetts, Weston received $4,338,573, amounting to 8.9% of the town's budget. State funding for the entire Commonwealth averaged 28% of the budgets. Surprised?

On the other hand, local aid cuts for this fiscal year for Weston is $38,151, corresponding to cuts as a percentage of fiscal year 2002 local budget 0.08%, as per Globe of January 31, 2003, p. B9.

NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

Come and visit our museum which includes some new displays; there are now informative labels at each major exhibit.

Among future plans is a spring walk through old Jericho Village with the Weston Forest and Trail organization; on the 19th of April perhaps a reenactment of the militia from the Weston Green over Old Road and return for refreshments at the Musuem.

We also need volunteers to identify and catalog many rare items.

WESTON WINTER WONDERLAND

Approximately 45 inches of snow has been plowed this year in Weston, about one third of the roads were treated with salt and sand. About 6 inches of powder fell on Christmas Day, costing the town $36,000 to clean up; on Friday, 2/7/03 c. 13 inches came our way, costing us $21,000.

Our winter storm staff of 22 people uses 50 pieces of equipment, of which 17 belong to the town and about twice as many are rented from contractors. The Department of Public Works reported that the $117,000 projected snow clearing budget has been reached in January.

Source: Weston Town Crier of 2/13/03.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

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Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 2003 Volume XXXIV, No. 2

3000 Flags on the Town Green

George F. Amadon standing before a multitude of flags.
The flags were planted on the Town Green in honor of the lives lost in the September 11, 2001 attacks.

LAND PROTECTION AND STEWARDSHIP IN WESTON

Land conservation in Weston turns fifty this year. In 1953, the town established a Committee to Investigate and Report on the Matter of a Town Forest. Within a few years, several small tracts of Town Forest had been acquired, the seedpods of more than 2,000 acres of open space that we own today. Weston at that time was a town of dwindling farms, fading estates, and a few other small seedpods -- of residential development. The genetic map by which Weston would unfold was set in the early 1950s by two critical decisions: residential zoning, and open space acquisition. The upshot is the suburb we see today: two-thirds detached houses on large lots and one-third schools, golf courses, and protected open space.

The first half of this period, 1953-1977, could be called the era of land *protection* in Weston. The next quarter-century, running into our own time, has marked the era of land *stewardship.* My purpose here is to review protection, look more closely at stewardship, and briefly consider what may become of our land in the next fifty years.

Half a century ago, the only available mechanism for protecting land in Massachusetts was "town forest." The acquisition of municipal forests had arisen in the early 20th century, when the eastern United States was severely deforested and there was a fear of timber famine. The original purpose of town forests was to promote reforestation and timber management, but the movement faded as New England reforested itself and lumber remained cheap and plentiful on the world market. The town forest idea was revived as a means of open space protection in the 1950s. Weston was among the leaders in this new drive to preserve the rural character of suburbanizing towns.

Beginning in 1955 Weston began acquiring town forests on Highland Street, in Jericho, and on Sudbury Road. In the same year the Weston Forest & Trail Association was formed to educate townspeople about the forests and maintain trails within them. Dr. William Elliston was the leader in all these efforts. From the start, the strategy was to acquire large tracts of backland at reduced prices, leaving the owner with street frontage increased in value.

In 1961, as a result of new state enabling legislation, the Conservation Commission was established and took over the job of protecting open space for broad, ecological, scenic, and recreational purposes. Land acquisition continued through the 1960s, but became more difficult as land values continued to rise. With completion of the turnpike connector to downtown Boston the pace of development increased, and it became clear that most of the remaining large tracts of open land would soon be gone. Townspeople rallied by passing two bond issues totaling over $4 million, in 1972 and 1974. This marked the heroic climax of open space protection in Weston. Again Dr. Elliston led the charge, along with Hugo Uyterhoeven, Ken Germeshausen, and Bus Willis. Over 1,000 acres were quickly added to the 763 already existing. The Weston College land, bought in 1977 with a separate bond issue and state matching funds, provided a crown jewel.

That largely concluded the era of major land protection in Weston. Some important parcels have been acquired since, but they hardly amount to a hundred acres. The Case "Forty Acre Field" was purchased from Harvard in 1986 (as municipal purposes land), more Coburn fields on Church Street were protected through a partial development arrangement, the Dickinson and Danforth fields were acquired with state funds in compensation for the taking of conservation land for the MWRA tank at Norumbega. The "Sunday Woods" on Concord Road marked the first parcel to be bought primarily with funds from the Community Preservation Act surcharge on property tax. With that steady stream of income, Weston is likely to continue acquiring small pieces of land for years to come, adding perhaps another one or two

Elmer Jones Leading a walk.

Morning birders in the Coburn meadow.

hundred acres. Emphasis has shifted mainly to open fields that are visible from the roads, and protection of these valuable parcels will often require creative mixtures of partial development, private fund-raising, and CPA funds.

Let us turn now to the era of stewardship, or "community land management." During the decades that land was being acquired to protect "rural character," genuine rural activity in Weston was disappearing. At the beginning of the 20th century Weston was a town of active farms and managed woodlots, but productive land use largely ceased during the middle part of the century. In the past 50 years, Weston has rapidly grown up in wild forest even as it has suburbanized. Very little open farmland is left, and you could count the remaining private farms on one hand -- Danforth, Anza, Dickinson, Carter,...?

As for active forestry, some pine planting and "timber stand improvement" took place on town forest land in the 1950s, but that also petered out. There was no real market for timber, and no real taste for cutting trees. With commercial agriculture and forestry in decline, and a growing feeling among conservationists that the best management was no management at all, one might have reasonably predicted that Weston's open space would be left to look after itself. But once 2,000 acres of land had been acquired in the 1970s, something much more interesting happened. We can review the rise of community land stewardship in Weston under four headings: trails, fields, market gardening, and forestry.

Weston in the 1950s had an extensive network of riding trails left over from the estate era. Equestrians in town played an active role both in protecting land, and in maintaining the basic trail system. As more conservation land was acquired, many smaller walking trails were added by the Weston Forest & Trail Association. The leading figure in this work has long been George Bates, who along with Hugo Uyterhoeven and others laid out trails, acquired easements over private land to allow access and connect the pieces, and got the whole system properly marked and mapped.

Trail maintenance began as a volunteer effort, and many people continue to help out in various corners of town. But volunteers alone were found to be inadequate to the task of keeping the trails clear, especially following storms such as the heavy May snow of 1977. In 1979 Forest & Trail decided to hire someone--me, actually-- to maintain the trails on a regular basis, removing windfalls and cutting back encroaching branches and brush. The following year Land's Sake was formed and has performed this work ever since, under the direction of Forest & Trail . Taking care of trails has proven a good way to introduce Weston's young people to conservation land. Besides the work done by Land's Sake, the trails have been improved by occasional Eagle Scout projects as well. For years, the trails have hosted monthly Forest & Trail outings, and more recently a series of "Biodiversity Day" walks each June. Oh the whole, Weston has one of the most extensive and best-used systems in the region, with some 65 miles of trails--and the work continues.

Although most of Weston's "open" space is forested, there are also three dozen small fields on public land scattered around town. Most are only a few acres, amounting to perhaps 100 acres in all. These fields provide a lingering element of rural character along our roads and lend real charm to some of our better-used conservation areas such as Cat Rock, the Weston College land, and the Sears land. At the same time they provide diverse habitat for grassland and shrubland species not found in deep forest. For some years the fields were mowed by the Highway Department, until the job was delegated to Green Power Farm in the mid-1980s. The mowing duty came to Land's Sake along with the rest of Green Power in 1991. Many of the fields are not mowed until August, to allow time for ground-nesting birds to fledge their young.

Mowing fields and maintaining trails for scenery, wildlife, and passive recreation is about

Squash Harvest at Land's Sake.

Author with woodpiles, Highland Forest.

what one would expect a suburban town to do with its conservation land. But in Weston things took a new twist with the birth of community farming and forestry. Market gardening, timber harvesting, and an ethic of active land stewarship have become part of our heritage as well. This story began in 1970 with Green Power Farm on Merriam Street, and a man named Bill McElwain. Green Power started as a volunteer effort to grow vegetables for the inner city, but within a few years the town acquired the land (for municipal purposes) from Weston College, and McElwain was hired by the newly-formed Youth Commission. Green Power grew to about 15 acres, and apple cider an maple syrup [described in the Spring, 2003 Weston Historical Society Bulletin] were soon added to the program. The aim of these projects was to involve middle school and high school students with agriculture, and to send low-cost food to urban shelters and lunch programs.

Green Power was transferred to the Conservation Commission upon the demise of the Youth Commission in the mid-1980s, and in 1991 the program was merged with Land's Sake. That organization had been incorporated as a non–profit in 1980, with three central aims: to provide ecologically responsible management for town farm and forest land, to actively involve young people with that land, and to generate as much income as possible directly from sales of products and services. Land's Sake was founded primarily by Martha Gogel and Doug Henderson, who saw an opportunity to build upon what Bill McElwain had begun. The resulting arrangement, by which Land's Sake contracts with the Conservation Commission, Weston Forest & Trail, and private landowners to carry out a range of land stewardship and educational projects, has proven reasonably efficient and stable.

Land's Sake got its start farming the Case "40 Acre" field in 1981, under the auspices of the Arnold Arboretum. Over the years a successful farmstand and pick-your-own business has been built up, employing young people and largely paying its own way. Harvard pushed the Arboretum to sell the land, and the town bought 35 acres for $3.5 million in 1986 -- the largest land deal in Weston's history at the time (and not much less than what had been spent to acquire over 1,000 acres a mere decade before). With the Green Power land on Merriam Street and Concord Road, Land's Sake now cultivates about 25 acres. In any given year 15-20 acres are growing organic fruits, flowers and vegetables, while the rest rotates through soil-building cover crops.

Partly by design and partly by chance, Land's Sake has developed a new model for community farming of suburban open space. The farm strikes a balance between commercial rigor and educational and social purposes -- a fruitful marriage of conservative and liberal precepts. It is run by hard-driving professional staff, but also employs and educates interns in their twenties and middle school students. Crops are cultivated by a judicious combination of power equipment and intensive hand transplanting, weeding, and harvesting. On-site retail sales pay most of the bills, but in addition some 20,000 pounds of produce are shipped every year to the city food security network, a donation underwritten by the Town of Weston. Small, irregular fields interspersed with ornamental plantings make an attractive blend of working market garden and arboretum, a place where visitors feel welcome to go for a stroll. Here is open space stewardship that looks terrific, engages people with the land in many ways, and all but pays for itself. Land's Sake is now internationally recognized, and frequently hosts visitors who hope to try something similar in their own communities, ranging from Rhode Island to Tuscany.

Meanwhile, something even less predictable was going on in the town forest. No active management had been undertaken since about 1960, and letting nature manage its own affairs appeared to be settled doctrine. But with the 1970s energy crisis and the revival of heating with wood came new calls for forest management. The Conservation Commission

initiated firewood thinning on a small scale in 1981, and the cutting was carried out by Land's Sake. Through the 1980s 50-100 cords were cut each winter in Jericho and Highland Forest and sold to local customers. In 1989, the Conservation Commission approved a long-range forest management plan prepared by John Potter, who had grown up working for Land's Sake, gone on to the Yale School of Forestry, and returned to run the forest program in Weston for several years. This initiated a new era in Weston's approach to its town forest.

The plan identified 1,440 acres of manageable oak, pine, and red maple forest throughout Weston's conservation lands, of which part was to be set aside as a wild reserve. The remainder was to be thinned every 15 years or so as it grew, and then to be harvested of mature pine and hardwood timber on about a 120 year rotation. This would mean that some 10 acres every year would be cut heavily enough to release young seedlings, using either "shelterwood" or "group selection" methods that avoid jarring clearcuts. The purpose of such sustainable forestry is to continually regenerate a small percentage of the forest in ways that imitate the periodicity and scale of natural disturbances such as hurricanes and nor'easters. This allows one to harvest high-quality wood products and at the same time maintain a diversity of habitats, dominated by mature forest but with some younger patches scattered throughout the forest.

In practice, nothing like as much cutting as the plan called for has been carried out. It's very hard to make such careful, small-scale forest management pay -- it's just not the same as selling organic strawberries to an eager local retail market. Nevertheless, through the 1990s and to this day Land's Sake has continued cutting on about 5 - 10 acres every winter, on the Sears land and in the Ogilvie forest as well as the Highland forest and Jericho. This has been mostly firewood thinning, but some larger hardwood and pine timber has been harvested as well. Most timber has been sold to commercial sawmills, a smaller amount cut into lumber on a bandsaw mill and sold to local customers. Young people are involved in the forest project by splitting firewood. Modest as it may be, this program of active suburban forest management is also widely regarded as a model, and like the farm has attracted visitors from as far away as Scotland and Japan.

Where is this innovative program of community land protection and management likely to go in the next half century? Historians never predict the future with much confidence, but I will venture a few guesses in order to provoke some thought. The largest challenge that Weston's land will face in the coming years may be increased public use of our trail system. Overall, I believe this is a good thing -- Weston now depends on the city of Boston for its existence, and suburban conservation lands are inevitably a metropolitan resource. On balance the educational value of city people walking in the woods far outweighs any minor ecological disturbances. But recreational use does pose some difficult issues. We will need to steer people and dogs away from areas that harbor rare species, for example. Heavy dog traffic that makes the trails uninviting for other users may prove the greatest challenge of all, and the Conservation Commission is already confronting it.

Our open fields present a challenge that might be made into an opportunity. Every year the forest creeps in closer behind the mower. Now the Forest & Trail Association and the Weston Historical Commission are looking into using CPA funds to push some of the field edges back to the stone walls, restoring their historic dimensions. This would greatly improve their scenic quality. And we might also look into maintaining these expanded fields with livestock. Nothing restores rural character like putting a few sheep in a field, as Faith and I discovered when we kept sheep throughout Weston. Concord and Carlisle are now *renting* sheep to maintain many of their open lands. Rotational grazing with portable fences

need not hinder public access, and can be compatible with grassland birds. Since there is a growing niche market for grass-fed meat, such a project could cover a substantial part of its own costs, while reducing the need for mowing.

We should see continuing growth in demand for local, organic produce as well. We can expect market gardening in Weston to slowly expand in acreage, in intensity, and in variety or crops produced, and to keep involving plenty of young people. But there will be competition from other users for the limited supply of open land in Weston. Most of what is now being cultivated is "municipal purposes land" which may also be desired for recreation, schools, or community housing. Just how strongly distaste for the industrial food system will push us to prefer using our municipal land for locally-grown food rather than these other pressing needs, is hard to guess.

It may be even more risky to predict future trends in forest product markets than in farming. Will the energy crisis return to stay? That would improve demand for firewood and for chips, which might be used to efficiently heat a municipal building. Sustainable local timber production is being promoted by some environmentalists as a way to combat the "illusion of preservation" --that is, setting our own forest aside while we import 98% of our forest products from other, more vulnerable parts of the world. This might work best as part of a community forest coalition across several towns in the region, which would provide an adequate forest base to support timber procession for a local retail market. We can imagine sustainably-certified flooring, paneling, and furniture made of our own "character wood." The major challenge facing such a program will be to satisfy Weston residents that other ecological values of the forest, such as protection of biodiversity, are also being served.

During the past half century Weston has emerged as a national leader in land protection and stewardship at the local, community level. This did not happen by chance, but because of the foresight and persistence of Bill Elliston, Bill McElwain, George Bates, and many others who poured themselves into the cause. These people did not always agree on which land was most important to protect, or how best to care for it, but they did share an unshakable conviction that hanging onto a decent amount of farm and forest land, and encouraging townspeople to stay in touch with that land, is vital to our community. Whether the coming generations of Weston conservationists are willing to devote themselves to this land with the same generous vision and tenacity will determine what is to become of this noble heritage.

Brian Donahue

SOURCES:

Pamela W. Fox, *Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, Massachusetts, 1830 - 1980* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Peter E. Randall, 2002).
Elmer E. Jones, *Walks on Weston Conservation Land: A Guide* (Weston: Weston Forest & trail, 1999)
Brian Donahue, *Reclaiming the Commons: Community Farms and Forest in a New England Town* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999)
Open Space & Recreation Plan: Resource Analysis for the Town of Weston, MA (1996)
All photos are by Nina Danforth, and we appreciate her contribution.

Brian Donahue is Associate Professor of American Environmental Studies at Brandeis University. He worked at Green Power Farm, was among the founders of Land's Sake and the Weston Land Trust, and serves on the board of the Weston Forest & Trail Association. He is a member of the Weston Conservation Commission and the Community Preservation Committee. He has lived in Weston since 1976, is married to Faith Rand, and has two children, Liam and Maggie, who are fifth-generation Weston residents.

A MOVIE MADE AT THE JOSIAH SMITH TAVERN

In early March, Ted Garland, a Weston High School teacher, called and inquired if his photography group could use the porch of the tavern to shoot a few scenes. I told him that we would be delighted. Mr. Garland is head of a project to make a full length movie about the Mable Page murder which took place in 1904, in a house on South Avenue in Weston. They plan to take scenes in front of some homes that were in existence in 1904. The Board has agreed to support this project.

On Friday afternoon on March 2, 2003, Ted Garland with about 15 students arrived at the Museum, the actors putting on period clothing of the time, and crew setting up cameras and microphones with coaches placing actors. They even asked me to put on a long coat for a stand-in non speaking part. I was thrilled.

They were a most enthusiastic group of young people and cooperated very well with Ted Garland. It was a real pleasure to watch; it was an enjoyable afternoon.

George Amadon

THE SUGAR SHACK

This is an addendum to the Spring 2003 Bulletin article on maple sugaring in general and the Weston program in particular.

The Weston public in 1970 was becoming aware of both environmental concerns, and of new pressures on teenage children. Town Meetings, in several successive years, approved budgets for the acquisition of public lands and for programs specifically designed for after school and summer activities for children.

A newly arrived Weston resident, Bill McElwain, assumed the responsibility for the children's programs, which he gave the significant title of "Green Power". His first inspiration was a farm program to grow vegetables on a piece of public land off Merriam Street. The produce was sold in Weston from a small portable stand near the Town Common, but much was donated to Boston food aid programs.

The maple sugar and syrup was a logical extension of the summer program, and with volunteer help, a sugar shack, complete with a furnace and boiling pans, was built in the early spring of 1972. Middle school student volunteers helped in the collection and processing and were paid for their efforts out of the sale of the syrup at the end of the season.

The Green Power programs were funded out of a line item in the Town's annual budget, but Town managers eventually dropped it. Green Power continued for several more years, but the non-profit Land's Sake group gradually assumed all of its function. The Conservation Commission has supported Land's Sake here, and in other Land's Sake's program which it deems to be in the Town's interest.

The Green Power name for the farm operations off Merriam street, and the Sugar Shack still stand as reminders of Bill McElwain's vision.

Douglas Henderson

MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS BY GEORGE F. AMADON, AIR FORCE VETERAN AND PURPLE HEART RECIPIENT, MAY 26, 2003

Today we celebrate in the town of Weston the 124th remembrance of the sacrifices made by our armed forces striving to maintain the freedoms of our country. Unfortunately, we have been at war again, and we must add to the casualty list those killed, wounded and missing in action, fighting in Iran.

We remember the casualties of all our former wars, and of Iraq, those who served in the army, navy, marines, and air force in known and unknown locations. We also honor the loyal women who worked in the factories and anxiously awaited the return of their loved ones.

We are again living in a troubled world, one that requires skilled leadership, compassion and most of all an interest in diplomacy. Our young men have gone through a terrible experience in Iraq, and we hope that our prayers have helped bring them back to us.

As we enjoy the newly renovated Town Hall, it might be a time to retell some historical events that this hallowed ground that the edifice stands upon saw. In the beginning, the present green was a swampy area with a small pond on the west side and a river running through it to the east side. There was a field near the Lamson house in which Colonel Lamson trained his militia. The Lamson house was near where the drugstore is now located. He used to graze his cattle on the green.

The first use of the common was upon the bluff at the eastern end of the common where a series of churches were built. The first two were meeting houses where discussions of the town affairs were carried out, as well as religious services. In 1841, a Paul Revere bell was installed, and its pleasant ring heard ever since. A watering trough and Cutting's store were erected on Center street, and a town hall was added in 1847 which included a library, schools, and a large open hall for meetings and social events.

On the western side of the green was Lamson's Park, upon which the militia were trained and soldiers were mustered for duty in the French and Indian wars and the 1775 march to Lexington and Concord. In 1787, during Shay's rebellion, when Lamson's Weston Light Infantry company of 10 privates joined General Lincoln's army, the command of this C company was given to Abraham Bigelow, which infuriated Colonel Lamson.

There were some unusual events that took place on the green. The first was the memorial service for the returned soldiers on August 22nd, 1865, in honor of the fallen in the Civil War. The exercises began in the First Parish where upon the walls were written," My peace I give unto you, the noble army of martyrs, Praise Thee," and other fitting mottos. After the exercise at the church the assembly was escorted by Gilmore's brass band of Boston to the Town Hall where a repast was enjoyed, followed by remarks by Rev. E.H. Sears who said that "A New England mother could now rock her baby in safety," and to the memory of "those who returned shrouded in the flag which they could defend no more."

Early in 1761 the town received a grant from the powers that were and was able to clear out the river in the green which created a meadow instead of a swamp, but it was not until 1911 that Arthur Shurtleff was approached and eventually drained the green underground and designed the green as it is today with no bandstand or monuments. The old Town Hall was to be moved to where the new one stands but it was not possible, so among many tears it was torn down. The new edifice was completed in 1917. At the dedication Lt. Governor Calvin Coolidge gave the keynote address. Calvin Coolidge was not known for his oratory skills. However, he managed to say: " We are coming to see in these modern days

that we need not only utilitarian motives, but that we need to give some time, some thought and attention to the artistic in life. That need to pay some attention to that which is beautiful as well as that which is merely useful." As the town green had been planted as a war effort, the setting of the dedication was a bit unusual, among ripening squash, green beans and turnips.

In 1918 the people gathered together at the center to honor Capt.. Robert Winsor Jr., Commander of Company F 303rd Infantry which was in training at Ft. Devens. His father, Robert Winsor, Sr. made arrangements with the Fitchburg railroad, and Company F. was transported to Weston! They marched to the new town house to enjoy an elegant collation and an evening of entertainment. On July 5, 1918 the Company then sailed for France.

George Amadon

MORE ADDENDA TO THE SPRING, 2003 BULLETIN

Re "Weston Winter Wonderland" on p. 15 of the Spring, 2003 Bulletin: It was written on the 13th of February, 2003, when the Bulletin went to press. Little did we know that the storm to outdo many a previous storm came upon us on Monday, Presidents' Day, the 17th of February, with more snow than any of us liked to see - or shovel!

The maple article was not written by Steve Cyr but by the lady working under him, Kerisa Perasella; the editor regrets the misunderstanding.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Town leaders salaries, from Weston Town Crier, 8/7/03, pp. 1 & 5:

Jeff Ritter, Wayland, Executive Secretary	$93,000
Tim Higgins, Lincoln, Town Administrator	$111,000
Carl Valente, WESTON, Town manager	$113,000
Philip Lemnios, Natick, Town Administrator	$119,000
Maureen Valente, Sudbury, Town Manager	$120,000

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores for 10th graders, percentage of passing English and Math:

WESTON 2002:	English 100	Math 99	2003:	English 97	Math 97
WAYLAND 2002:	English 98	Math 96	2003:	English 99	Math 98

Not in Our Time (?):
TIME on 6/6/03, p.22, reported that "one in five teenagers had sex before age 15; one in three parents knew that their 14 year old had sex." 0 tempora, 0 mores!

Unwind from shock: 10% of US potato crop is bought by McDonald's; 8% of Americans eat daily at McDonald's, reported by TIME 8/18/03, p. 20

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

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Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 2002 Volume XXXIII, No. 1

WESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT CHIEF JOHN E. THORBURN

Weston Fire Department Chief Thorburn retires from his post on July 1, 2002. He grew up and went to school in Wayland and joined the Weston Fire Department in 1961 as a fire fighter, rising to Chief in 1976. He lives in Southboro with his wife June, who was born and raised in Weston. The town formally said farewell to its popular Chief at a retirement party at the new Community Center on Sunday, January 27, 2002.

MERRIAM VILLAGE

In 1975 the Board of Selectmen, acknowledging the escalating prices of housing in Weston and the difficulty senior citizens were experiencing in remaining in the Town, appointed The Housing Action Committee, giving it the responsibility of working with the Planning Board in "investigating the possibility of development of housing for the elderly in the town." The Committee was ably led by Laura Clausen. Not surprisingly, the Committee found an urgent need for affordable housing for Weston residents who wanted to stay in Weston but who no longer wanted to live in their large houses after their children had moved away. Weston's clergy became active supporters of affordable housing for senior citizens, with Monsignor Francis S. Rossiter of St. Julia Church and the Rev. Judy Hoehler of First Parish Church playing important and influential roles.

The Committee rejected as politically unacceptable the establishment of a public housing authority. So what to do? Along came Victor Harnish, a longtime Weston resident and a Waltham lawyer, who offered to form a non-profit corporation to build and operate housing for citizens 60 years or older. Victor had his eye on a portion of the land on Merriam Street that the Town had purchased from Weston College in 1972 for a municipal purpose, such as a fire station or a school, but which in 1976-77 was not planned for any municipal use. Victor convinced the then Board of Selectmen and later Town Meeting to convey 15 plus acres of municipal land to the non-profit corporation for a consideration of $100.

Weston Community Housing, Inc. was formed as a non-profit corporation in December of 1976 under Chapter 180 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth. It is classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a Section 501 C(3) Corporation. Howard M. Forbes, Lyman Stone Hayes, Elizabeth D. Nichols, Laura B. Clausen, Judith L. Hoehler and Victor C. Harnish, were the incorporators. The original officers were Victor C. Harnish, President; Kenneth Fish, Treasurer; and Alice Fraser, Secretary. The original Board of Directors was composed of Harnish, Fish, Fraser, Welton D. Brown, Howard M. Forbes, Leon H. Cohen and Elizabeth Colt.

At a special town meeting in January of 1977 the Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to present a petition to the General Court of the Commonwealth requesting the General Court to adopt a Special Act authorizing the Town "to sell for an inadequate consideration to a non-profit corporation of the Commonwealth to be used for elderly housing" certain land on Merriam Street. The General Court enacted the Special Act, and with the wholehearted support of the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board and the unchallenged presentation of Victor Harnish, Town Meeting in May of 1977 voted to authorize the Selectmen to convey the land to the non-profit corporation "for the construction and operation of housing for elderly persons of low and moderate income" and subject to "such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen in their sole discretion shall determine." According to the Town Report for the year 1977, Harold Hestnes, who was then serving as Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, at the Town Meeting "tendered deed to the property to Mr. Harnish in exchange for a certified check in the amount of $100." At the same Town Meeting the Town voted to amend the zoning by-law of the Town to change the zone in which the property was situated from "Single Family Residence District A to Multiple Dwelling District."

The Board of Selectmen and the non-profit corporation entered into an agreement under which Weston Community Housing, Inc. agreed to build on the property up to 30, but no less than 20, "one and two bedroom apartments especially designed for elderly persons," at least 20 of which would be commenced to be built within two years. The Selectmen re-

served the right to approve the architectural design features of the buildings containing the apartments. The Agreement also provided that the monthly rents "will be the minimum necessary to cover mortgage interest, heat, utilities, reasonable management expense, maintenance costs and insurance, taxes and/or payment in lieu of taxes."

The non-profit corporation lost no time in getting started. It raised "seed" money from interested townspeople and was able with the gift of land to raise a construction loan of $900,000 from the Waltham Savings Bank, later the Sterling Bank. It hired the well-respected Waltham architectural firm of Keyes Associates to design and plan the project and in November 1977 entered into a construction contract with Merrit Homes, Inc. and Leonard Rittenberg of Weston to construct five buildings containing 30 apartments and a community center building. Construction began in November, and most of the apartments were ready for occupancy in the fall of 1978.

To help pay for the project Weston Community Housing, Inc. required the initial tenants to put down deposits of $12,500 for a single bedroom apartment and $14,500 for a two bedroom apartment. The deposits would be amortized over an eight-year period, and if any tenant vacated an apartment before eight years had expired, the tenant would receive a portion of the deposit back. Without the gift of land and the deposits of tenants the project could not have been built. It was through such imaginative financing that the project, now called Merriam Village, was completed in 1978. The total cost was $1,000,000.

Applications for residence in Merriam Village required that a tenant had to be at least 60 years of age, with preferences for those 65 years or older, and could not have an annual income greater than $24,000. The age limitation still applies but the maximum income level in 2002 is $38,000 for an individual and $44,000 for a couple.

Tenants began moving into Merriam Village in late 1978. The rent for a single bedroom apartment was $225 per month and $260 for a two-bedroom apartment, making Merriam Village the best value for rental housing in Weston and indeed in the Greater Boston west suburban area. In 2002 the rent for any apartment that may become available can run from $585 to $685; still the best bargain in the area.

Jean Jones, a long time resident of the Town, was hired as Manager, and her knowledge of the Town and her friendly and sensitive manner was of material aid in developing the policies and rules that brought structure and fairness to the way Merriam Village was managed. The tenants of the Village over the years had lived in homes of their own and were not accustomed to living in apartments with others so close by. Jean and later managers, especially Connie Davis, made the Village run smoothly and happily for the tenants. Judith Sennett of Sudbury served for several years as Manager, and Randy Barkman is currently serving as Manager. Each has served in that role as a friend and counselor to the residents and in many situations as a "handy" person assisting residents in fixing minor problems.

Merriam Village proved to be so successful that the waiting list for apartments grew to more that 65 applicants, with some applicants waiting as long as 5 years to rent an apartment. Consideration was given in 1989 to expanding the Village to the maximum number of units permitted under the zoning by-law. The Board of Directors appointed a committee under the initial leadership of Susanne Haber followed by Stephen Hassell to look into the matter of enlarging the Village. Tony Nolan, Bill Rousseau, Connie Davis, George F. Amadon, Linda Walden and Ken Fish were other members of the Committee. Peter Morton and Edward Frothingham participated in the Committee's deliberations as interested citizens.

The Committee worked hard and diligently in formulating plans to finance and construct additional housing on the site. The Board of Selectmen were receptive to the idea of ex-

Victor Harnish, one of the founders of Merriam Village; in the background is Connie Davis, former manager of Merriam Village.

Building 2 in the Village.

Victor Harnish with the "silver shovel" at the second phase ground breaking of Merriam Village.

A quiet evening at the Harnish House, the Community House of the Village.

panding the village by adding 32 additional apartments and agreed to amend the Agreement between the Town and the non-profit corporation to allow such expansion. In addition, the Selectmen permitted the non-profit to use the payment-in-lieu of taxes that otherwise would have gone to the Town to pay for the preliminary plans necessary to assure the expansions feasibility and to develop preliminary architectural plans. Mass Housing Partnership made a modest loan to help pay for the preliminary plans. An Early Project Assistance Loan of $2,559,000 was made by the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation in the spring of 1993. Sterling Bank agreed to "take out" the construction loan once the project was completed. (The Citizens Bank is the current mortgagee.) Tise Architects, Inc. was hired as architects to develop plans and specifications for the new apartment buildings. After the plans had been approved by all appropriate Town officials, The February Corporation d/b/a Charlesgate Construction Company was engaged to construct the additional houses and to rebuild The Harnish House which serves as the Village community house. The expansion was completed in 1995, and the new apartments were soon all occupied. All 62 apartments in the Village have provided needed, safe and comfortable housing for many of the area's senior citizens since 1978.

Weston Community Housing, Inc. is composed of Members of the corporation known as Public Members, who are residents of Weston interested in elderly affordable housing and Resident Members who are the residents of the Village. The Public Members elect annually 5 Directors to serve on the Board of Directors, and the residents elect annually 3 Directors. All Directors have an equal vote on all matters, receive no remuneration for their services and all act on a volunteer basis. Stephen Hassell and Kenneth Fish are currently serving as Honorary Directors but do not vote. Most of the legal work and construction expertise have been provided on a pro bono basis, with the recent legal services in conneciton with the expansion being generously provided by the Boston law firm of Foley, Hoag & Eliot, LLP.

Included among the residents who have served as Directors elected by the Public Members, in addition to those previously named, have been Katherine Helgeson, Carol Norquist, Susanne Haber, Stephen Hassell, Gene Miller, Valerie Kirshy and Edward Rossiter. Pamela Wood is currently serving as a Director and Vice President. Valerie Kirshy is President, a position she has ably filled for the past several years. Former Presidents include Victor Harnish, Kenneth Fish, Katherine Helgeson, Tony Nolan, and William Rousseau. Over 20 residents have served as Resident Directors. The current Resident Directors are George Amadon, Jean Osborn and Olive Harris. In addition, Harry Jones, for years Weston's Town Clerk, donated his time and talent and acted as the accountant for the non-profit corporation. Albert Pearson succeeded Harry, and George Wilson followed Al in that role and currently serves as Treasurer.

Over the years, the corporation has had two capital campaigns which raised funds used to landscape the Village. Weston Community Housing, Inc. and the residents are deeply appreciative of those who gave so generously so that trees, bushes and plants could be added to the beauty of the Village.

Ken Fish

Ken Fish is a lawyer, a Weston resident since 1960 and has been giving generously of his time and talents to various community affairs in Weston, including Merriam Village. Ed.

One of Weston's most successful and popular cultural units is the Military History Group, which in conjunction with the Weston Public Library presents well attended lectures several times during the year. On Thursday, December 6, 2001 the topic of the lecture series was "The Home Front." Two of the presenters, both Weston residents, talked about the home front in the United States, and we are proud to offer their remarks here to our membership. We would also like to encourage our readers to send us their memories of the home front - or of service years - during World War II. Ed.

THE HOME FRONT IN AMERICA 1941-1945

Introduction by William Saunders presented at the Weston Public Library on December 6, 2001 before the Weston Military History Group.

Sixty years ago this week the United States was plunged into the Second World War. When it emerged four years later, people returning to their former lives looked in amazement at the changes in American society and at the deeds of those who served at home.

Tonight we attempt to capture a sense of what life was like for those who lived on the home front in WWII and to enumerate their amazing accomplishments. The civilians of all of the combatants pitched in and gave their utmost for the national cause. Their dedication, their sacrifices, and their achievements amaze us today.

To appreciate what the war meant to American life, let me bring some statistics to your attention. But first let me qualify this by saying that every historical source gives a different set of numbers, so we must make our own choices.

Economy: The war absorbed 40% of America's GNP. This compares with some 4% today. If you imagine that the military burden we bear today were expanded tenfold, then you can understand the load carried by the taxpayers of the 1940s.

The Armed Forces: At the beginning of 1940 the American Army was rated 18th in the world. The fall of the Netherlands later that year raised it to 17th. In terms of manpower it grew from fewer than 250,000 in 1940 to 8 million by 1944. That is to say it expanded over thirty times in only four and one half years.

Manufacturing: The war effort required an enormous increase in war production from industries that were short of workers and material. When the war began in Europe, President Roosevelt called for 50,000 planes. People thought he was crazy. By war's end, they had built nearly 300,000. In addition they built nearly 80,000 tanks, 370,000 artillery pieces and over 3,000 merchant ships starting from nearly zero in 1940. By the end of 1942 America was producing more weapons than all three Axis powers combined. Industry had to both expand, retrain, and retool on a gigantic scale. Makers of coffee pots and baby carriages were now making machine guns and lifeboats. The loss of labor to the military was made good by the recruitment of women into the industrial labor force. Some six million women entered the workforce between 1940 - 1945. It is hard to grasp today the vehement resistance to this in those times. In the 1930s a poll showed that over 80% of Americans felt that a married woman should not work if her husband had a job. Most large manufacturers were unwilling to hire women for factory work. Even the exhortations by the goverment failed to move them. Only when the draft created a disastrous labor shortage did they give in. As it turned out, the women succeeded brilliantly and changed the American workplace forever. When Eleanor Roosevelt went to the Kaiser Shipyard in Portland, Oregon, she found that 60% of the work force was female. The opening of war industry jobs caused an estimated 20 million Americans to move to new communities. War industries created ram-

pant growth. Mobile, Alabama, for example, a major shipbuilding city, grew by 67% in less that two years. Housing in these boomtowns was so scarce that the federal government got into the construction business, mass producing low cost temporary homes for war workers.

Food production was vital to the war effort. America needed to feed a huge army and sent enormous amounts of food to Great Britain and the Soviet Union. The farm labor force was decreased due to the draft. Equipment, parts, fuel, and chemicals were in short supply. Yet food production actually increased during the war. This increase was mainly achieved through manual labor. People created Victory Gardens in yards, on rooftops, in public parks, athletic fields, wherever there was land. Arlington Race Track in Chicago, Portland Zoo held Victory Gardens. Those planted in the Fenway in Boston are still operative today. Altpgether some 20 million gardens produced almost one half of the nation's produce – eight million tons of produce per year from 4 million acres. In addition volunteers by the hundred thousand went to the farm to help – office workers, housewives, school children, boy scouts, girl scouts, retired people. Some 4-5 million people volunteered.

The railroads were the main agent of transportation in those days. They too had to contend with shortages of labor, equipment and fuel. Yet they doubled the ton miles of freight carried by rail. In addition to normal traffic they had to carry 16 million military personnel, take on the burden of hauling 2/3 of Texas gulf oil to the East and transport some of the 20 million Americans who moved during the war in search of defense jobs. Old equipment was pressed into service – even engines dating from 1900 and ancient wooden coaches. It was said that anything that looked, sounded or smelled like an engine was put to work. People learned to service equipment more quickly. Women were hired to do heavy men's work, and retired men and boys were employed maintaining machines and track. Special trains called "P" trains (preference) pulled by fast passenger engines were run to move critical war shipments on tracks cleared for them throughout their runs. A "P" train could pick up a fifty car block of tanks in Detroit at sundown and put them on a Hoboken dock the next day at noon.

The spirit of the times is recaptured by the writings of those who were there: the willingness to work and sacrifice, the shortages, the rationing, the constant worry about friends and loved ones at the battlefronts. Gen. George Marshall's wife was at a football game in Washington D.C. on November 8, 1942, when the PA system announced the American landings in North Africa. This was the long awaited first offensive since the humiliating defeat at Pearl Harbor. Her memoir captures the emotion of the moment as well as any I have ever read. She wrote that he crowd of 25,000 went wild: "Like waves of an ocean the cheers rose and fell, then rose again in a long sustained emotional cry. Football players turned somersaults and handsprings down the middle of the field."

Bill Saunders was born in Boston in 1940 and grew up in Newton. He graduated from the Browne and Nichols School and Pomona College and received an MBA from Northeastern University. By profession he is a computer programmer. He moved to Weston in 1974.

MEMORIES OF THE WORLD WAR II HOME FRONT

Everybody of my generation remembers where he/she was on December 7, 1941. I certainly do – by pure accidents of family and fate, at 1:05 PM, EST, on December 7, 1941, I was standing at the top of the underwater escape tower at the New London, CT submarine base. My uncle, Eliot Marshall, called "Steam" by his family and friends, was a Lt. Commander in the Navy and was doing his biannual Monsen Lung escape training. As Uncle Steam got to the top of the tower where my dad and I were standing, sirens went off all over the base. A CPO went to Uncle Steam, and they talked quietly. Following this, my uncle told dad the news, and we were hustled quickly off the base. I was very excited and kept asking my father, "What happened?" He finally turned and said, "Bobby, shut up." I figured it had to be serious. Soon this Day of Infamy was imprinted forever in our minds, and for our country and my family WWII has started.

As with virtually every U.S. family, after Pearl Harbor everything had changed. My dad was working with the Army Quartermaster Corps. Uncle Jack was a lieutenant in the Army. Uncle Richard and grandpa Leach were working at the Iron Works in Bath, ME, building destroyers. Uncle Clayton was a major in the Army Air Force, and Uncle Steam was commanding the submarine, Cuttlefish, based at Pearl Harbor. Our men were leaving the small town of Sanford, ME.

Sanford, then population about 8000, is a small textile town in SW Maine, 11 miles from the ocean. Its textile industry was originally built on making blankets for both men and horses of the Union Army during the Civil War. Perhaps the blankets for horses were different than those for men, but knowing the ruling families of Sanford, I rather doubt it. During WWII the mills made poplin for tents and pile fabrics for cold climate wear. They ran 3 shifts a day, 7 days a week for 4 years – earning the coveted E for excellence award from the Army and Navy. It was not only the mill's work that made Sanford interesting during the war but other aspects of life such as gas rationing with A, B, and C cards. All the adults argued whether doctors and shipyard workers, such as my uncle, should get the coveted C's, because there was little gas to go around. Old bicycles became valued. Ration cards for meat and butter were needed, but living on the edge of town with farms adjacent made those commodities a non problem for our family. We did not worry about meat

Lt. Commander Elliot "Steam" Marshall, U.S.N. Uncle of Robert Leach, April 1943.

points. Our major ration card problem was getting shoe coupons for me, because my feet kept growing while the rest of me, distinctly to may chagrin, did not. War bond drives were always being held, and my paper route money went to buy $25 bonds, which I bought for $18.75. I thought that was a heck of a bargain. My father then taught me about interest, but it took Jimmy Carter in 1979 to teach be about inflation.

As kids, we collected scrap metal and rubber, made huge tinfoil balls, and we practiced commando self defense tactics guaranteed to maim any invader and to provide bloody noses for our practice partners. During the summer, we got to pick green beans and blueberries as our war effort contribution. With blueberries, I worked on the theory of one for me and one for the war effort. With the beans, the war effort got them all. We were told we were lucky picking beans, because up north in Aroostook County they had the hard work of picking potatoes, plus they had POWs working there. To a kid that sounded cool. In the fall, kids helped mothers canning everything from rhubarb to beans, while the dads were in the basement turning apple cider into applejack and, given the kick it had, wondering if it could be used as a substitute for gasoline.

More fun were the periodic Civilian Defense air raid drills during which I was a boy scout messenger, complete with arm band and a tiny bicycle lamp covered with black tape to emit a pinpoint of light. I went with Mr. Mellor, our local head air raid warden, who wore his WWI steel helmet, as we checked blackout curtains and warned the transgressors. Air raid precautions may seem strange to you given the 3500 miles between us and the Germans, but you did not know that Sanford had a huge airfield strategically located. The town started with an average field, which was used by company people such as my dad, but in February, 1942, the USAAF came and built several very long runways. Then the Naval Air Force moved in and from June 1942 through most of 1944, Sanford saw hundreds of B17s, B24s and B25s which landed there, refueled and went on to Gander, Iceland and thence to Europe. Virtually every day we saw planes overhead, and many of the adults were making book on the day one of the planes would hit the big smokestacks of the mills.

As a consequence of all this air activity, the USAAF established an Aircraft Warning Service post in Sanford at the highest point in town, Mt. Hope, elevation about 250 feet. This overlooked Sanford. People signed up to man the post, and my mother and I took every 6th weekend. It was great, like camping out, but with this enormous responsibility of protecting Sanford from sneak attack. Most of the men who went up there drank and played cards. The women tended the big victory garden and yelled at the kids who were running around the big field or getting in the vegetables. Any airplane we detected, we were to call in to the Air Force Control, giving the estimated elevation (a guess for us all), the direction of flight (a guess for my mother), and the type of plane (not a guess for me). As a kid I studied plane identification cards and can still recognize a B17, B25, etc. Not only could I identify our planes, but I could identify a German Heinkel, Junkers or even a Messerschmidt 109, whose range probably precluded coming to Sanford, since they barely made England and back. Some of you may wonder about the need and effectiveness of the aircraft warning system, but I would point out that there was never a successful bombing of Sanford, ME, during all of WWII. I was never rewarded for my herculean efforts, but my mother received an award certificate for her Aircraft Warning Service from the USAAF.

In many ways, being a kid during WWII, while safely living in Sanford, was exciting, as we followed the war from afar on National Geographic maps taped to the bedroom walls. I know where Tobruk and Bataan were much better than where South Dakota was located. Reality did intrude though. On my paper route I would see the little window banners with blue stars signifying a person in the service from that house, and sometimes there would be

Mrs. Estella Leach, mother of Robert Leach, 1942, Sanford, Maine.

Lt. Commander Robert Leach, U.S.N.R., M.C., 1963.

a new gold star signifying a death. Then I would hear the adults discussing that.

This was sadly brought to a climax for me in December 1943. Uncle Steam Marshall in 1942 had taken part in the great battle of Midway as the commander of the USS Cuttlefish, which served as a picket submarine and which actually had first contact with the Japanese armada. For that and other missions, he was awarded the Navy Cross. He then returned to Kittery, ME, where he took over a newly commissioned submarine, the Capelin. He went back to the Pacific in June of 1943, where he completed several successful patrols. In late December 1943, my aunt, my mother's twin sister, who was staying at our house, received a call from the Navy, telling her that her husband was MIA. In March, that was changed to "presumed dead."

The excitement of being a boy scout messenger, the furor over ration coupons, and the identification of non-hostile aircraft was replaced by the reality of Uncle Steam's death. In later years at the beginning of the Viet Nam War, when I was on active duty with the U.S. Navy, I visited Pearl Harbor. Along with many others, I visited the Arizona Memorial, but I was far more interested in the Pearl Harbor Submariners Chapel which is dedicated to the 51 United States submarine crews who were lost in WWII, among whom was my Uncle Steam, Commander Eliot Marshall.

Dr. Robert Leach and his wife, Laurie, have lived in Weston since 1965. Dr. Leach is presently editor of the American Journal of Sports Medicine and Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Boston University Medical School. He graduated from Princeton University in 1953 and received his medical degree from Columbia University. He served as a Lt. Commander in the U.S. Navy from 1962 to 1964. Professionally much of his work has been in the field of sports medicine, and he served as the Chairman of the U.S. Olympic Sport Medicine/ Sports Science Committee for 9 years. He, his wife and 6 children are all active athletes, and members of the family have won National Championships in tennis, wrestling, and yacht racing.

THE RUSSIAN PRINCESS

The Linwood Cemetery is a reflection in stone of the changing demographics of Weston. The older sections are exclusively European, mostly English names. There is also a "potters field" for the graduates of the "Poor Farm".

Starting about 1920, a few Italian family names appear. Now these are joined by Asian names.

In between there is a section in which Scots and English are side by side with Swedish and some German names. There, in their midst, is a flat grey stone, about three feet by five feet, set into the ground, rather than standing upright.

It bears the legend:

Zoe Alexis Bakeev
b. Princess Obolensky
in Mogilev, Russia
Dec. 25, 1895 – March 20, 1956
Andre Alexis Bakeev
b. in Kursk, Russia
April 18, 1885 – Aug. 7, 1960

How did a Russian princess come to live and die in Weston?

My mother told me that the princess was working in a Red Cross hospital in Italy in the years at the end of World War I. A doctor from Weston, Dr. Fresinius F. VanNuys, was also working there. When he returned to Weston, he prevailed upon a wealthy landowner in Weston to invite the princess and her husband to come as guest.

After some time, the Westonian had a pre-fabricated house placed on his land at the corner of Chestnut Street and Highland Street. Here the Russian couple and their two children, a girl, Zekia, and a boy whose name I never knew, lived.

Mr. Bakeev had built up a small business restoring antique furniture in a shed on the property. He hired me as an apprentice for a few weeks one summer when I was about fourteen. It was at the height of the Great Depression, and my brothers and I took any work we could get. Mr. Bakeev spoke good English, but was not very communicative, speaking only to direct my work. Most of the time he was out in has little station wagon, taking finished pieces to customers, or picking up more work.

He was a small, slight man, but the few times I glimpsed the princess as she worked in her garden, I got the impression of a large blonde woman, with a sad face.

I did not know the daughter and son, but my youngest brother was in the same class as the girl. He said she was very smart and very attractive. He paid less attention to her brother, of course, but remembered him as a good student and athlete.

There were other stories, current at that time, about Cossack raids and flights in the night. I have no way of knowing the real story of their life in pre-war Russia or their flight to Italy.

I only know of their final resting place, far from home.

Douglas Henderson

ANY HORSE THIEVES IN WESTON?

Mysterious are the ways of God and of historians! We receive numerous queries from near and far, on subjects practical and esoteric. We could not answer a recent one from an assistant professor of political science at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, asking whether we know of 18th and 19th century anti-thief societies in and around our neighborhood. The professor shared with us a list of 20 such societies in Massachusetts: we found them so fascinating that we are sharing the list with you. If you happen to know of even a trace of such society that is not on the list, by all means let us know (781-237-1447) or contact directly Dr. Ann-Marie Szymanski, Political Science Department, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019. Below the list of the known societies:

1. Ashburnham Mutual Society for Detecting Thieves
2. Society in Dedham for Apprehending Horse Thieves
3. Society in Dedham for Apprehending and Prosecuting Thieves
4. Dorchester Association for the Detection and Prosecution of Trespassers on Gardens, Fields, and Orchards
5. Framingham Thief Detecting Society
6. Haverhill Fire Club (not clear when it assumed anti-thief activities)
7. Holden Thief Detecting Society
8. Kingston Society for the Detection of Thieves
9. Society for Detecting Horse Thieves in the Towns of Mendon, Bellingham, and Milford
10. Society for Mutual Aid in Detecting Thieves of Millbury
11. Society in Milton for Apprehending Horse Thieves
12. Newton, Needham and Natick Society for Apprehending Horse Thieves
13. Norfolk and Bristol [Counties] Horse Thief Detecting Society, also known as Society for Detecting Horse-Thieves, and Recovering Stolen Horses belonging to Wrentham, Franklin, Medway, Medfield, Walpole, Foxborough, Mansfield, and Attleborough
14. Northampton Society for the Detection of Thieves and Robbers
15. Norton Detecting Society Formed for the Purpose of Detecting Horse Thieves and Recovering Horses
16. Rehoboth Detecting Society, later known as the Rehoboth, Seekonk, Pawtucket, and East Providence Detecting Society
17. Society in Roxbury, Brookline, and Brighton for Apprehending Horse Thieves
18. Warren Thief Detecting Society
19. Worcester Association of Mutual Aid in Detecting Thieves
20. Worcester Association for the Protection [sic]

HOPE OF SPRING

The earth tips towards the warming sun
The flight of geese had just begun

With strength and determination
Tiny buds began a generation

Poking their heads above the earth,
Laughing with considerable mirth

The warm sun brings the light of day
And buds pop with color gay

Bursts of color cover the ground
With leaves and butterflies all around.

I feel the sense of grace take over
And the need to search for a lover

And I'm young again today
Drunk on flowers and new mown hay

The spring so long awaited is here,
With hopes of glorious summer near.

George Frazee Amadon

WESTON MAPLE SUGAR PROJECT 2002

The Maple Sugar Project is an after-school program to introduce students to the traditional New England craft of making syrup from the sap of the Sugar Maple tree. Land's Sake runs the program with support from the Weston Conservation Commission, and it is open to all Weston Middle School Students. Starting in Mid-February, students help identify and tap trees, haul buckets of sap, stack firewood, boil and bottle syrup and conduct other sugar shack chores. The Project ends the last Saturday in March with the annual "Sugaring Off" event where students sell syrup and demonstrate all that they have learned.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

College students nowadays equip their dormitory rooms with numerous conveniences: refrigerators (98%), microwaves, computers, televisions, VCR's, stereos, printers, answering machines, and videos (52%).

Where do teenagers get their spending money? Part time work (52%), own credit cards (10%); they expect to spend between $75 and over $200 for holiday shopping; they prefer stores to shopping online.

Complaining about Massachusetts taxes? The highest state plus local taxes are in New York (15.1%), Maine (14.7%), Wisconsin (13.3%). Massachusetts, in spite of the Taxachusetts moniker, is not among the first ten highest tax paying states.

Gray power in Weston: population over 60 according to the 2000 census: 1980: 1,754; 1990: 2,129; 2000: 2,387; 2010 (est.): 2,707. The decade 1990-2000 showed a growth of 12.1%, the two decades 1990-2010 (est.) shows a growth of 27.2%.

INTRODUCING: SAMUEL R. PAYSON

Sam Payson

Sam Payson was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1915. Following graduation from Milton Academy and Harvard College in 1938, he embarked on a career of an insurance broker servicing both personal and commercial lines of insurance. With the exception of World War II years, he continued in this capacity until the late seventies when he sold his business to another broker.

In World War II, he served in a field artillery unit of the 26th Infantry Division, attached to General Patton's Third Army, seeing action in Northern France, the Bulge and Central Europe, ending up in Czechoslovakia.

January 1951 saw Sam departing Brookline, settling in Weston and marrying Ruth McWain of Sherburn, Massachusetts. In June 1955 a son, Timothy, was born. An illness which Ruth suffered from in the war years re-occurred, and she died in March 1965. Three years later Sam married Laura Richardson, born and brought up in Weston.

Sam has been involved in varied Weston activities. In 1956, as its chairman, he led the annual Community Fund Drive to a successful conclusion. During the time his son Tim was at Meadowbrook School, he became its trustee and later its treasurer. He was Clerk of the vestry of St. Peter's Episcopal Church during the time it was being planned and built. For a few years, he was a member of the Republican Town Committee. On the frivolous side, he was in dancing choruses of three original Friendly Society musicals.

In the past, he has served as treasurer, then Secretary of the Weston Historical Society, and at the time of this writing, remains a member of the Board. For over fourteen years, he has served as a member of the Weston Historic Commission whose mission is to preserve Weston's historic buildings, roads and land. On occasion, Sam shows up at the Society's museum and helps catalogue old Weston photographs. He has also written articles for the Society's Bulletin.

CORRECTION

In the Fall, 2001 BULLETIN, on page 16, a printer's imp rechristened George F. Amadon and listed him as George F. Anderson. The Memorial Day 2001 article was written by George F. Amadon.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

OFFFICERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President: William Martin
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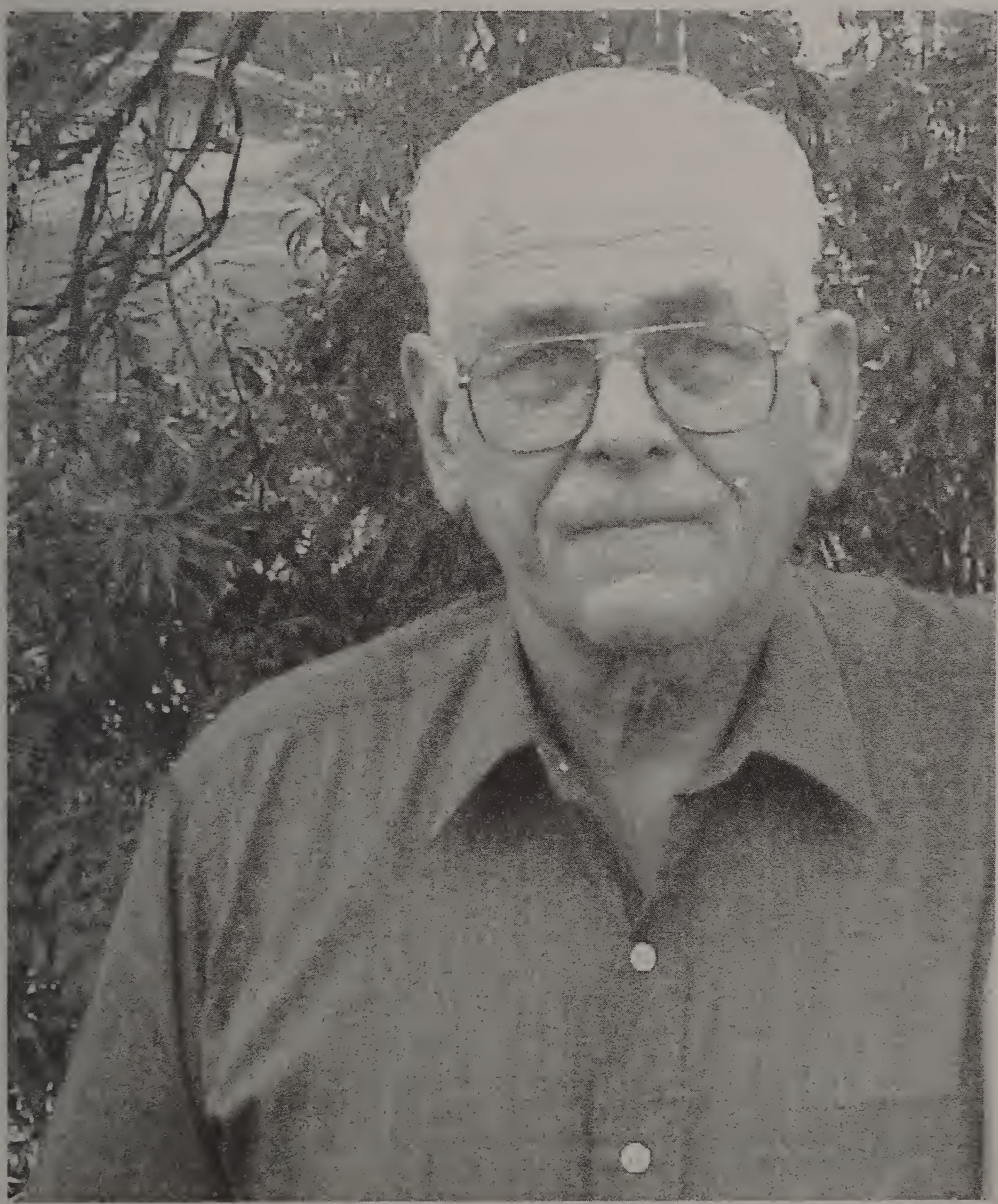
BULLETIN Editor
Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 2002 Volume XXXIII, No. 2



Bill Livingston of Weston's Nobb Hill Press, who just retired after many years of service to our community. He printed our Bulletin with a few exceptions since its founding in 1964.

FORTY-FIVE YEARS IN WESTON CENTER

In 1956, when I bought the company Nobb Hill Press, Inc., I had no idea that I would be there in the same location for 45 years. Over the years I have seen many changes to the center; but most of all I have fond memories of the people I met and the relationships that developed.

We all know how difficult it is to park in the center now; but back in the mid-fifties parking was parallel on both sides of the street. In the summertime you might see three or four cars parked in the whole center of town. In the afternoon some of us would sit on the stone wall on the north side of the street and make bets if a car would drive into the center as to where they would stop. At the time the post office was located in the brick building where Weston Pediatric Physicians, P.C. is now, and the Newton-Waltham bank and Trust Company where Fleet Bank is now.

Back in the 1950's there were two markets in town, the Weston Market which was located in what is now The Gift Gallery in the DeVito Building on the south side of the street, and the Triple A Market which was located on the north side where Central Tailoring is now. Eventually the Weston Market moved to Wayland and Triple A Market moved into the shopping area on Centre Street.

I wonder if any of the older residents in town can remember the soda fountain at the Weston Pharmacy (now Eaton's), or the two gas pumps at Parker's Hardware (now Puopolo Hardware), with iron pipes extending over the sidewalk with the hoses and nozzles attached to them.

Many times I have been asked the origin of the name, Nobb Hill Press. My understanding is that the company started in a garage on Raynor Road off North Avenue by a Mr. Willard Frye in 1951. Before the garage was built, there was a flat field with a large mound of dirt which was called Nob Hill. It was carted away by horse and wagon and replaced by the garage. In Mr. Frye's wisdom the word Nob looked better with two "b"s in it. The company moved to its present location in 1955.

Before Nobb Hill Press there was a shoe repair shop located on the premises. For the first three or four years it was a common occurrence to have someone walk in with a pair of shoes in their hands. After that time it did not occur as often. Eleven years later someone did come in with a pair of shoes. However, twenty-seven years later an elderly woman came into my office with a pair of shoes and said, "I know I'm in the right place, where's the cobbler?". Being in a silly mood that day, I told her "I'm sorry but the cobbler couldn't wait any longer for you."

Over the years I have seen a lot of business come and go, and a lot of new proprietors of businesses which have been established for years in the center. Weston center is a very unique community. The people and business owners are very friendly and helpful to each other.

I remember an incident which happened many, many years ago. I had a customer who needed a job done for a presentation the next morning. He asked me if I would mind dropping the job off at his house on my way home that evening, and put it in the back seat of his car. I said I would but it would be late. That night I worked until two o'clock in the morning. On the way home I drove up to his house and opened the overhead garage door as instructed to put the package in his car. The bedroom was above the garage. Needless to say there was absolute panic inside the house. He forgot I was coming, and his wife knew nothing about it. Every now and then we see each other; and we still laugh about it.

Over the years I had many incidents which are unforgettable. What really stands out are

the individuals with whom I came in contact. The Town of Weston has been very fortunate to have many individuals interested in the history of the town. Mr. Harold G. "Red" Travis, the first editor of the Bulletin, for example: I can remember the enthusiasm that he had for its beginning; Mr. Brenton H. Dickson and Mr. Homer C. Lucas, who wrote the book One Town in the American Revolution - Weston, Massachusetts; Brenton Dickson also published two other books, Once Upon a Pung and Random Recollections. Mr. Howard Gambril was founder of the Golden Ball Tavern Trust, an archaeological museum on the Post Road.

I mention these four individuals for the many countless hours that they would sit in my office and talk about their experiences. I do remember that occasionally they would mention that they spent the afternoon checking out the facts in an article that someone else had published. There was a little competition between them; and nothing would please them more but to find a mistake in their search for accuracy.

I cannot mention all the names of individuals who have a special place in my heart; but I must mention all of the people who work at the Town Hall and other departments in the Town of Weston. They are a great group of individuals and a credit to the people of the Town of Weston.

Finally, I cannot forget four very important people in my life at Nobb Hill Press, Dr. Vera Laska (now editor of the Bulletin) and her late husband, Andy. I was always fascinated by the stories of their lives and the places that they travelled together. I felt it was an honor to have them as friends.

Don Devereaux (the quiet one), my partner for over 35 years and his dry sense of humor; people would call the following day laughing because it took them that long to figure out what he had said. It was a joy to work with Don for so many years; and our customers realized how much fun we had together.

My wife Jeanne, our bookkeeper and secretary, spent many hours at home doing the work that Don and I did not like to do.

In September 2001 I retired from the company, but not from working. Jeanne and I have a passion for the disabled and handicapped kids in Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the Eastern Caribbean. We got so involved with them that we started a non-profit charitable foundation called Windward Islands Charities, Inc. and are sending wheelchairs, medical supplies, school books, school supplies and personal care items to homes for the disabled and small medical facilities.

We now spend 5 1/2 months a year on an island in the Grenadines called Bequia, where I volunteer teaching a class in woodworking at the Sunshine School for children with special needs. Jeanne also volunteers her time at the school and at the Bequia Casualty Hospital. Both of us are very happy that we found a life after Nobb Hill Press.

Bill Livingston

THE WILD MAN FROM BORNEO - PART II

In the Spring, 2000 issue of this Bulletin I wrote about a song which my uncle Harry sang one summer day, when I was very young, a repetitive, additive song which began "The Wild Man from Borneo has just come to town."

I went on from that memory to a paper which I found in the Weston Historical Society's archives, entitled "Wild Man of Borneo", and which I reproduced in its entirety. This told

the story of two brothers, diminutive in stature, wards of Hanford A. Warner, resident on Crescent Street in Waltham. Mr. Warner had been associated with the Barnum Circus in some sort of publicity capacity.

This relationship with the circus led the two little men to travels throughout the United States, England and France, to be exhibited with other circus celebrities, as "Wild Men from Borneo." The article's writer emphasized their exemplary conduct and dignity, and in their retirement years, the desire for privacy.

Just recently, I came upon an undated letter, with nothing to indicate the address of the writer and recipient, which added significantly to the story of these men. I have excerpted pertinent portions of the letter to add depth to their image. The person whose recollections appear in the letter is Ella Frances Richardson of Weston, who taught in the Weston schools late in the 19th century.

Miss Richardson roomed with Mr. & Mrs. Hanford Warner on North Avenue for several years while she taught at a school located on a hill opposite the Hastings Organ Factory. The Warner's son Henry was Miss Richardson's pupil for some time.

The Warners also had, apparently as wards, two brothers, diminutive in stature, but in most other respects normal, except that they were only able to communicate by gestures and grunts. It is not clear how they came to be wards of the Warners, but this relationship lasted throughout their lifetime.

Mr. Warner was at one time a publicity agent for the Barnum Circus, and it was probably through this connection that they first appeared on stage as "The Wild Men from Borneo". Their stage names were Waino and Platano, but there is no record of them doing anything wild, on stage or off. Their long careers in the entertainment world were marked by exemplary conduct and dignity.

Miss Richardson recalls that their room was always neat and clean. They may have done some farm work. Miss Richardson remembers one of them chasing the cows with a stick.

Miss Richardson left Weston in 1875 to visit her Uncle Charles Richardson in California, and in 1878 she went to Florida to stay with her father at Lake Braintiley. The next year she returned to Weston where she had relatives.

It was sometime in this period that her Uncle Warren Richardson, who lived in Waltham, told her that two of her old friends were at Austin and Stone's Museum in Boston. When he took her there, the two saw the famous Wild Men from Borneo there on a high platform. Waino saw her and made signs to her to come to the front of the platform.

Miss Richardson realized of course that Waino had recognized her, so she had no hesitation when Waino reached down and removed her glove, pointing to the Lasalle (sic) class ring. He then put one of his hands on his knee and with the other went through the motions of spanking a child. She remembered that he was re-enacting the time she had punished Henry Warner.

The letter writer added one further detail. The Boston Herald (she did not remember the date) published an article about the little men, saying they did not come from Borneo.

This leaves me with one question. Did the song my uncle sang originate the name "The Wild Man of Borneo" or did the circus publicity agent (Mr. Warner) originate the title which was then incorporated into the song?

Douglas Henderson

GROWING UP IN WESTON IN THE EARLY 1900's

Weston was a small country town in an age without television, no radio, few telephones and no cars. All street light were turned off half an hour after midnight. You had the roads to yourself, and it was safe to walk them day and night. As I look back from my "golden age" point of view, I miss today the neighborliness that was such a part of Weston. It has all but disappeared. Perhaps I was more fortunate than many, but my neighbor's home was like a second home to me. There was always visiting back and forth with my parents and a sharing of everything with your neighbor. We were thoughtful of each other, interested in each other's lives.

Weston Center was where our present [meaning the old library as of 1984, ed.] library and the Unitarian Church are. The town flag was near the old iron watering trough for the horses. The Town Hall was across the street. Under the Town Hall were kept the horse-drawn fire trucks. To the left was the only country store, owned by George W. Cutting. The left hand side of the store was our post office, where we had to go to collect our mail. It was routine for us youngsters to walk uptown around five o'clock to get the mail. Mr. Cutting would be sorting it after it came by train to Weston station, then to the store in a wheel barrow. Sometimes one of the clerks from the store came in to the post office to assist Mr. Cutting. Because he had red hair, we always called him "red wing." Cutting's store did not carry perishable food, so milk was delivered to our homes in glass bottles by the milk wagon. Fresh fruit used to come from Waltham by a fruit car. We also had a fish cart and meat cart which would stop at our home once a week.

I lived within a mile from school, so I had to walk to school; otherwise "barges" and in winter "pungs" provided transportation for the students. On very cold mornings I would carry a hot baked potato to keep my hands warm, then throw it away for the crows to eat, as I neared the school. School days played a very big part in our growing up years. It was our social life. Those friendships formed in school have been for life. We did not need sports, as we got plenty of exercise when we got home from school, doing our daily chores, such as keeping the wood box full, finding the hens and collecting the eggs.

Weston's sections were Kendal Green, the North part, the South part near Norumbega Park, Stony Brook, Silver Hill, Cherry Brook, and so on. For me, who was very fond of wild flowers, Weston was a great garden. I knew where I could see certain flowers from year to year. On Old Road I could find Indian Pipes, on the short-cut to Weston station from the Boston Post Road near Mr. Horace Sears' greenhouses to Pat McAuliffe's home and livery stable there was a place where dog-tooth violets always grew. Going into Linwood Cemetery, that high bank on the left was covered with bluebird's foot violets, and so it went. Today new houses occupy much of my Weston wild flower garden.

We were among the few towns that had an early public library. Our town fathers then were good, far thinking planners. The library building was heated by a coal burning furnace. Sometimes the fire would go out overnight, sometimes we would have a poor lot of coal, and it would be impossible to get the heat up; then you brought a hot piece of soapstone to put your feet on, when there was little or no heat. The library was always kept open, even when schools were closed on account of bad weather. The hours over the years were always the same, so everyone knew when the library was open. In those days our library was rated near the top in Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Library Association. The alcove to the right of the main door as you enter was the children's room. It was very dark, poorly lighted, books bound in dark material and not attractive to encourage the young readers. Not many books for children were published in those years. There were no school librarians. One

High School graduation photo of Margaret E. Mosher.

Margaret E. Mosher in later years, date unknown.

person took care of our library year after year. By the 1920's changes took place. An assistant librarian was added. The Rosamond Freeman Room became the children's library through help from the two Case women, Carolyn Case Freeman and Louise Williams Case. For several years the Division of Public Libraries sent trustees, foreign visitors and many interested persons to see this room, as it was outstanding in our state. The room was finished in Honduras mahogany which provided a good background for books and added to keeping the room light. The long table in the center of the room proved to be ideal for children to look at books, study or do school work. There was also a storage room on the ground floor of the building. Only a few changes had to be made in this room. When Mrs. Freeman passed away, she left a sum of money for the Rosamond Freeman fund to buy children's books. For many years this was sufficient for children's books. Miss Louise Case was always very generous to the children's room. She donated several bronze statues that she thought would interest the children, a piece of Swiss wood carving of oxen, an ivory collection and cabinet from her father's collection, a bird bath, and stepping stones from the library to School Street, for the benefit of school classes walking to the library.

Changes took place in the adult section of the library as time moved along, some not so good, as the librarians have found out to their sorrow, such as the destruction of a pleasant reading room. The library in Weston has been fortunate to have so many former residents leave money for books to it. The trust funds were sufficient to purchase all our books at one time.

Margaret E. Mosher

Our archivist Douglas Henderson retrieved the manuscript of the above article from our archives. It was hand written by Margaret E. Mosher (1896-1996) and dated simply 1984. Many Westonites still remember fondly Margaret Mosher, who for many years was children's librarian in our town library. Ed.

THE BOSTON POST GOLD HEADED CANE

In August of 1909 Mr. Edwin A . Grozier, Publisher of the Boston Post, forwarded a gold headed ebony cane to the Board of Selectmen of over 400 towns in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and a few in Maine and Vermont, in a promotional effort to increase circulation of the paper. It was requested that it be presented to the oldest citizen of the town by the Board of Selectmen with the compliments of the Boston Post. It would be the property of the town, upon the death of the recipient to be reissued to the next oldest citizen, either man or woman. The cane was offered to towns only, not to cities.

Weston town records do not show the receipt of the cane. However, in the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, located in the Josiah Smith Tavern, is an oil painting by Miss Gertrude Fisk of Colonel Francis Ripley as an older gentleman in his Grand Army of the Republic Uniform, holding with both hands a golden headed cane.

Furthermore, an article in the October 1977 Weston Historical Society Bulletin states that both former Selectmen, Edward Dickson and his brother Brent, remember seeing Colonel

Francis Ripley with the gold tipped cane: this oil painting by Gertrude Fisk hangs in the Museum of the Weston Historical Society.

Ripley carry the cane on several occasions, particularly on Memorial Day. Most of the towns around Weston were presented the canes.

During the Civil War Col. Ripley was left for dead on the battlefield of Antietam; he was eventually carried to the Union Hospital at Chambersburg, Virginia, where he recuperated for seven months under the care of nurse Laura Ritner. After he was discharged, he returned home to Weston to retire from his business and purchase a farm of 100 acres now on Ripley Lane, which he ran as a prosperous endeavor. Shortly after the purchase of the farm he returned to Virginia and married his former nurse Laura Ritner, and we presume they lived happily ever after.

Many years later, Col. Ripley, then at 98 the oldest Civil War Veteran in Weston, passed away in 1939. But the cane has never been located to be passed along. The Ripleys' daughter Emma was to teach school for 42 years in Weston, then to write the book, Weston, A Puritan Town, an excellent history of the town's churches and houses.

The cane was gold tipped, with a 14 carat gold head with a two inch flat surface and inscribed: "Presented by THE BOSTON POST, to the OLDEST CITIZEN of WESTON, to be Transmitted". It had an ebony staff from the Congo. The canes were made by J.F. Fradley & Company of New York. The Weston Historical Society is most anxious to continue this tradition and has offered to provide a plain, gold headed cane to the Selectmen of Weston, should they care to carry on this unique presentation.

George F. Amadon

THE BLACKSMITH AND HIS ART

Excerpted from an unattributed document found in some papers in the Weston Historical Society Museum archives:

The first settlers in the British American colonies could raise or make almost anything the farm family needed to eat, wear or use, except iron and steel tools. For these they had to turn to the blacksmith's shop, one of the few places where the settlers had to spend money.

In much of America, surface iron occurred in soft crumbly stone, frequently found in swamps and bogs, called "bog iron" by the colonists; it was the raw material used by the early blacksmiths. The Saugus Iron Works in Massachusetts provided much of the material for smiths in the Boston area. There, the bog iron was heated over charcoal fires fanned by water driven bellows. The melted iron ran from the furnace into grooves in the clay or sand floor where it cooled to "pig iron."

This pig iron was re-heated (not melted) and could then be forged or hammered by hand into "wrought iron" shapes; it could be molded and poured into sand moulds to cool into the shapes of "cast iron" pots.

Wrought iron will not hold a cutting edge without a constant re-sharpening, so a crude blister steel was invented. Its outer surface was "hard as steel" but was soft inside. Re-heated and compacted under trip hammers, this was cut into thin strips and reforged into steel hard enough to make shears. Casting steel into desired shapes had to wait the introduction of steel factories in the early 1800s.

Blacksmiths still ply their trade, mostly for horseshoes, or the tourist trade. The last blacksmith shop in Weston was located at 486 Boston Post Road, run by Oliver Patriquin.

A personal note: My parents bought a set of heavy wrought iron andirons from him, and they are still in use in my home. As young boys, my brothers and I would occasionally pump the bellows for him, in return for which he would then bend horseshoe nails into finger rings for us. The shed was dirty, cobwebby and lighted only by a bare, electric bulb. It would be closed today by the Board of Health.

Douglas Henderson

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Here are a few trivia that might be of interest:

Citizens Against Government Waste released the shocking news that members of Congress in 2001 set aside for pork barrel projects $20.1 billion (b as in boy!). Sample on state level: Alabama planned to refurbish a monument to the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis!

Item: Our food industry produces daily 3,800 calories per person; luckily, an adult male needs only 2,500 calories per day. Leftovers, anybody?

We welcome new life member to our society: Mr. Robert F. Whiteof Weston.
Come and visit our Museum!

"The defendant hasn't a chance. He's engaged some green lawyer from New Hampshire by the name of Webster."

IN MEMORIAM: HARRIET ELLISTON

Harriet Elliston

Harriet Elliston, aged 97, left us forever this summer; she died in her home on July 8, 2002.

She and her husband, Dr. William A. Elliston, were long-time members of our Society. Harriet was the daughter of musician parents in Cambridge. Her father was a violinist (and judge), her mother a concert pianist. Harriet attended the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, then spent two years in Europe between the ages of 16 and 18, mostly in Italy and in France. After returning home, she attended Harvard with special permission as a girl (girls were not admitted to Harvard until 1943!) in the Department of Anthropology; she was the very first female graduate of Radcliffe College in anthropology.

Harriet Elliston was a highly active person in the field of human rights, supporting at various times the Rev. Martin Luther King and his cause; she was instrumental in founding the Weston-Roxbury summer camp in Weston. She was an early supporter of the Weston Forest and Trail Association, among others. The Ellistons lived in Weston since 1937 at a small farm where they cultivated flowers and later raspberries.

Harriet Elliston will be sorely missed.

HOW EDUCATED ARE WE?

A recent GLOBE article published an interesting survey of household incomes and percentages of college degrees in the population in Massachusetts towns. Here are a few samples that should be of interest to us in Weston; the listing below contains ALL college percentages higher than Weston.

Town	College %	Household Income
Warren	10	34,583
New Bedford	11	27,569
Fall River	11	29,014
. . .		
. . .		
Wayland	68	101,036
Sudbury	72	118,579
WESTON	75	153,918
Wellesley	76	113,686
Sherborn	76	121,693
Dover	78	141,818
Carlisle	83	129,811

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

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Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 2001 Volume XXXII, No. 1

Courtesy of B.L. Ogilvie & Sons

Beriah Ogilvie with his first truck, a 1921 Model A Ford.

THREE MEN FROM THE MARITIMES:
GEORGE FOOTE, BERIAH OGILVIE AND CYRUS CLARK

At the turn of the century times were hard in the Canadian Maritime Provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Three ambitious young men headed south to New England in search of jobs and a better life. The sons of farmers and fishermen, they had little more than a grade school education. The three - George Foote, Beriah Ogilvie, and Cyrus Clark - all settled in Weston, where their lives shared common themes. Foote and Ogilvie both ended up on Warren Avenue, where Foote cut ice and Ogilvie began the supply business which still bears his name. Foote's brother, Cherith, married Beriah's sister, Orinda. Ogilvie and Clark both depended on the hard work of their children, who joined them in business. All three men prospered by selling necessities to residents in a thriving country town.

Of the nine children of Nova Scotia farmer James L. Foote, six settled in Weston for at least part of their lives: James, George, Cherith, Irad, William, and Frank. James had a prosperous blacksmith shop and cider mill on North Avenue, described in a recent *Weston Historical*

Society Bulletin article (Fall, 2000) by his daughter, Elsie Foote Cooke. Cherith worked over the years as a florist, teamster, wood dealer and milkman who sold milk in square glass bottles from his dairy on Warren Avenue. Irad was a carpenter, and William worked as a painter and chair maker before moving to Waltham. Frank came to Weston to help James run "Foote's Spa," at the west end of the relocated Fiske barn on Boston Post Road. The spa, which operated in the 1920s, sold ice cream, soda, and meals cooked by Frank's wife, Alice.

George Albert Foote (1867-1944) came to Weston in 1884. According to the 1927 history *Middlesex County and its People*, he was "able and energetic" and built up "an enterprise which came to be known as one of the leading concerns of its kind in this section." In 1895, he purchased land on Concord Road next to the Cherry Brook Railroad Station, one of only two stops in Weston on the Central Massachusetts Railroad and a good location for off-loading freight. Foote set up supply yards and an office on the east side of Concord Road south of the tracks and later built a house there, in 1905. In 1911, he advertised as a "dealer in best quality coal, wood , ice, lime, brick, cement, flue lining and tile pipe, etc." (Edwin P. Conklin, Middlesex County and Its People (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., vol. iv, 1927, p. 368).

By 1915, Foote's business had grown so large that he sold off the coal and building supply dealership to the Waltham Coal Company and concentrated on ice. Except for farmers and estate owners who cut and stored their own ice, Foote was the only local supplier. He "harvested" ice from Foote's Pond on Warren Avenue, where the water level was raised by damming the stream. Winters were colder then, and the pond froze each year enough for one, two, and sometimes even three harvestings. Each winter, the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune* kept readers informed about the thickness of the cut ice, which varied between about 9 to 12 inches.

Foote's ice harvest was a community event. The ice was cut by hand or with horse-drawn cutters, later replaced by machines. As many as 25 men were needed. Sections of about 20 blocks would be partially cut and then floated like a small iceberg over to the shore. The individual ice cakes - each about one foot thick - were then split apart with a spear and directed onto an inclined ramp where they could be pulled out of the water by rods attached on each side with a pulley chain. When the ice cakes reached the top of the ramp, they would slide down a sluiceway to a platform between Foote's two large wooden ice houses. Here men would load the blocks into the ice houses in layers separated by sawdust and insulated with hay.

After the ice was harvested and the pond refroze, children were welcome to skate on Foote's Pond, which was a popular gathering place. At one time, the town maintained a flood light and warming hut there. Dozens of neighborhood children played Snap the Whip and Fox and Geese, competed in hockey games, or skated through the meadow and out to the railroad tracks.

Foote's employees delivered ice around town in yellow delivery trucks with a scale at the rear. Drivers chipped off chunks of ice to be weighed and carried to the customer's "ice box." After the two ice houses were destroyed by fire in 1936, Foote built a new ice house on his Concord Road property and brought ice in by rail. Not long after, electric refrigerators put an end to the business.

* * *

It was George Foote's brother, Cherith, who sold part of his land on Warren Avenue to Beriah Lemont Ogilvie (1877-1951) in 1910. Ogilvie was born in Kings County, Nova Scotia, the son of a sea captain. Like the Foote brothers, he had only a limited primary school

education before coming to Weston in 1894. After working as foreman at J. Cushing's feed store for thirteen years, Ogilvie organized his own business in 1919. He began with teaming and before long was selling hay, grain, building materials, wood, coal, cement and farm implements. An advertisement in a Friendly Society program of 1925 illustrates the diversity of the business after only six years:

> Contracts for lumber filled. Coal bins filled. Grain orders promptly attended to. Fertilizers and seeds to suit your needs. Hay, flour, lime, cement and bricks. Sawdust, shavings, straw and poultry litter. Equipment for all kinds of trucking. Oak wood and pine kindling. Biscuits and Kibbles for dogs.

The company acquired a fleet of trucks used to plow the snow from Weston's roads and driveways. By 1927, Ogilvie's biographical sketch in *Middlesex County and its People* reported that despite postwar financial fluctuations, Ogilvie had made his business an "unqualified and lasting success." He had increased the business from one-truck capacity to six, was employing ten men and had taken his place "as one of the financial leaders of this section" (Ibid., p. 367).

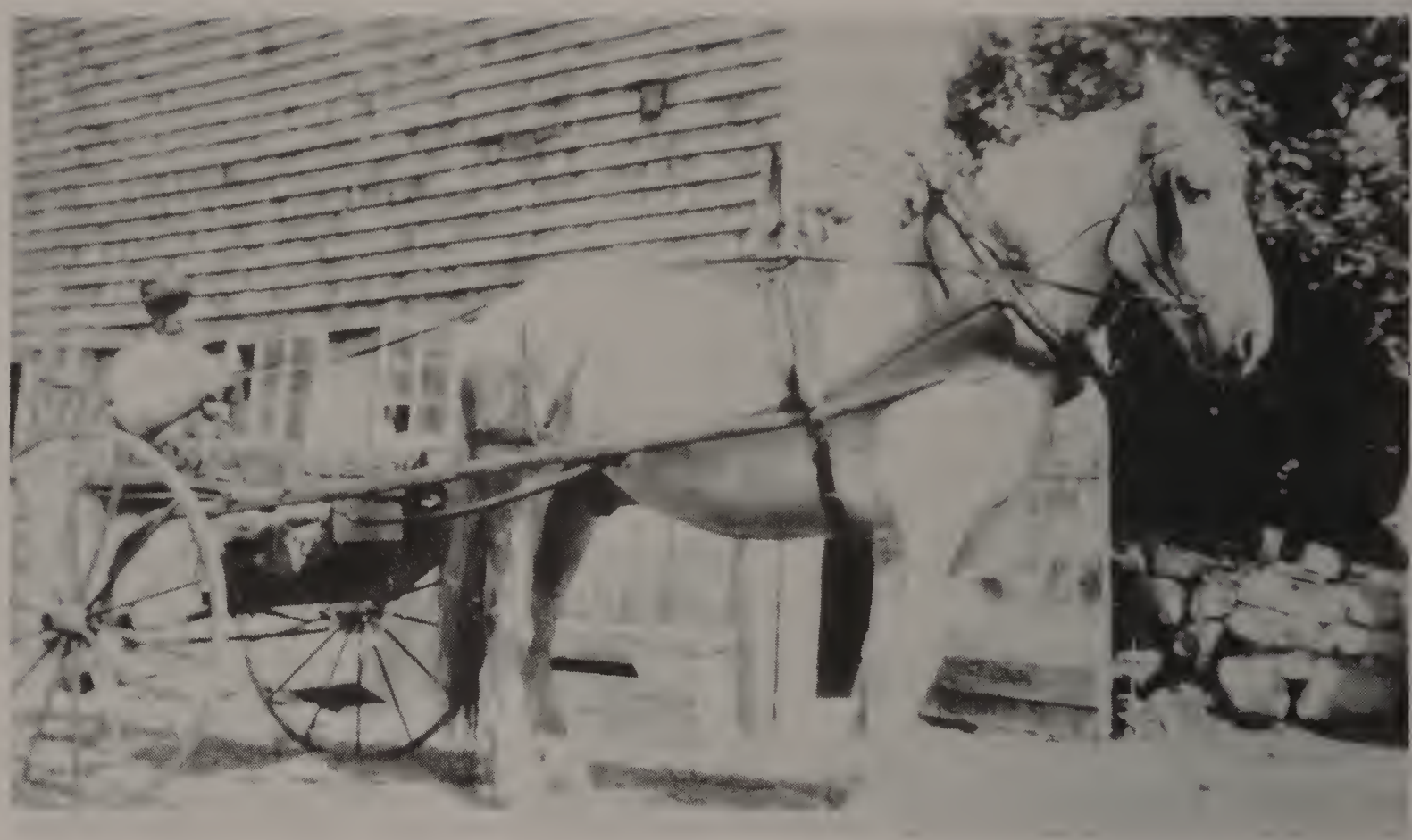
Beriah Ogilvie's success was due in part to the hard work of his large extended family. In 1900, Ogilvie married May Elizabeth Arrington, a Salem girl who was working as a nursery maid for a local family. The couple had five children: Harold (1902-1965), Gladys "Dolly" (Mrs. Francis Whittemore, Jr.), Delcia "Pearl" (Mrs. Julius Pickering), Myrtle "Vina" (Mrs. Vernon MacLeod), and Raymond (b.1912). Everyone worked in the business. Bookkeeping was done by Mary Elizabeth and later by all three daughters. The five presidents of the company have all been family members: Beriah Ogilvie, his sons Harold and Raymond, Dolly's son Alden Whittemore, and Alden's brother-in-law, Kenneth Sutherland. Beriah's nephew, Frederick Foote, was also one of the cornerstones in the business in the early years. In 1910, Beriah built a house on Warren Avenue next to where he later located his business. In the 1920s and 1930s, members of the family built houses on the south side of Warren Place.

To supply local needs for lumber, Ogilvie built a saw mill and cut trees from the family woodlot on Sudbury Road into rough lumber used for building. Farmers could bring their own logs to be cut to order. The saw mill was the nearest to Boston and cut logs from as far away as Weymouth. Custom sawing proved a problem, as farmers would return when the store was closed on Sundays and take what they thought was their wood. In later years, the saw mill was discontinued, and Ogilvies began supplying hardware and lumber.

When Beriah Ogilvie started on Warren Avenue, there was no store - just a barn where he kept horses for teaming and hauling. Beginning in 1928, the company had a yard and railroad siding at the end of Warren Avenue where coal and supplies could be unloaded. Hay, peat moss and wood shavings were stored in a cement block garage. When trucks replaced horses, Ogilvie took out the stantions in the barn and put up pegboard for hanging farm implements. As coal furnaces became obsolete, the company began selling oil burners and heating oil. They became known for their "Blue Truck Delivery" fleet, driven by employees in blue uniforms. In 1953-54 B.L. Ogilvie & Sons constructed an office in front of the barn, and in 1975 the company tore down the barn and built a 5,000 sq. ft. hardware and garden building behind the office. The present large metal lumber storage building in the rear was constructed in about 1992. Gradually, the business shifted from supplying farmers to supplying suburbanites moving into Weston.

* * *

Cyrus Clark grew up on Prince Edward Island and immigrated to New England as a young man. When he first came to Weston in the early part of the twentieth century, he worked as



Courtesy of The Clark family

Cyrus Clark with his family raised dairy cows, processed and delivered milk and other dairy products. Their house, barn and milk processing building were on the west side of Golden Ball Road just south of Boston Post Road.

a stableman for B.H. Dickson, Jr. His wife, Emma, also worked for the Dickson family. In 1906 Clark bought an acre of land from the great-grandson of Isaac Jones and built a simple clapboard farmhouse on Golden Ball road. Cyrus and Emma had four children, John (b. 1905), Bessie (b. 1907), May (b. 1911) and Gladys (b. 1913). In later years, other houses on Golden Ball Road were built by Clark family members.

Clark began farming land on Concord Road which belonged to the Dickson cousins, the Fiskes. They allowed him to use a large barn at the corner of Boston Post Road and Fiske Lane that had been saved in the Baldwin Tavern fire of 1890. Clark built up his own dairy and kept horses for contracting and hauling. But in 1920, a relative of the Fiskes, Dr. Chandler Robbins, arranged to build a house on the hill next to the barn. Clark lost his lease and sold the contents of the barn at auction. A printed broadside advertised 18 cows, one bull, and assorted farming implements:

> [The cows] are in all stages of milk from the fresh calved cow to those to calve from now and on into the summer and fall months. They are young and stylish, in good condition, and will milk 17 to 20 quarts a day or more, in full flow. If you are in want of a good cow, you can find one here. They will be milked out as fast as sold and ready to load onto your truck as soon as settled for. Don't miss this chance. Come prepared to bid and to buy and take them right away, as I close up that night.
>
> As soon as the cattle are sold, there will be sold a Gasoline engine and Sawing outfit, ensilage cutter and blower, a mowing machine, a horse, hay fork and ropes, Wheel Harrow, a Corn Planter, Stack of Hay, etc.

The barn was moved a few hundred feet east to a site across the street, where it was converted to shops. Clark started up his dairy operation again on his own property on Golden Ball Road. He built a barn behind the house with stalls for 20 cows and a small dairy

building with equipment for sterilizing bottles and pasteurizing milk. Cyrus took care of the cows, which had to be milked twice a day by hand. His son, John, who hated cows, was in charge of milk processing. When they first went into business, the family, along with one hired man, washed and sterilized the glass milk bottles by hand. Later, they got a bottle washing machine and an automatic capping machine, but the bottles still had to be placed in the machine by hand. John Clark's son, Jim, recalls climbing inside the pasteurizing tank to clean it.

Everyone in the family worked hard. Although he owned only one acre on Golden Ball Road, Cyrus Clark maintained extensive vegetable gardens on the Fiske land on Concord Road and later on land belonging to Ralph Jones at the end of Golden Ball Road. Emma Clark and her young daughters weeded long rows of carrots and picked beans. They made beer, ginger beer and elderberry wine. As a young adult, Gladys began working for the Willis family. John supplied wood to the Fiske house in Boston for use in winter. At night, John would take his rifle and coon hounds and hunt raccoons in the woods of Weston. Until the advent of artificial fur, he sold the skins for $20 - $30 to be fashioned into raccoon coats.

In the early 1950s, Cyrus Clark stopped keeping cows. His barn was torn down, and the Clarks began processing milk produced by other dairy farmers. Even before Jim Clark was old enough to drive legally, one of his jobs was to pick up milk from the Miller and Tyler farms in Kendal Green and from Walter Harrington in Wayland. In the 1950s and 60s, Clark's Dairy

Courtesy of Elsie Foote Cooke

In November, 1911, Mr. and Mrs. James L. Foote celebrated their 50th anniversary at the old homestead in Woodville, Nova Scotia. All eight sons and one daughter were present. Back Row: William, Cherith, Hartley, Harvey, James, Frank and George Foote. Front Row: Irad Foote, James Lawson Foote (father), Anna McNair Foote (mother), Ida Foote Bezanson.

had two trucks which delivered milk an cream, ice cream, bacon and eggs, orange juice and other items to houses in Weston, Wayland, Sudbury and Lincoln.

The dairy on Golden Ball Road operated on an honor system. When no family member or employee was present, patrons could help themselves to milk, juice or whatever else they needed and write down what they took on a pad of paper, along with their name. People would sometimes write down what they took and forget to write their name, and their slips would be hung on the bulletin board until people recognized the handwriting. The dairy wasn't locked up until 9 or 10 o'clock at night.

Cyrus Clark died in January, 1964 at age 99 1/2. He was active, together with his son John, in the operation of the dairy business until just before his death. Not long after, Clark's Dairy closed its doors. In 1968, Cyrus Clark's grandson, Jim, began working as a barber in the town center.

Pamela W. Fox

Pamela W. Fox is a preservation consultant and Weston historian. For the last three and a half years she has been working on a history of the Town of Weston, concentrating on the late 19th and early 20th century. This article is an excerpt from her book draft, which is beginning to make its way through the publishing process and will be available in the fall 2001. Mrs. Fox has been a resident of Weston since 1991. She lectures on Weston history, consults for the Weston Historical Commission, and serves on the Weston Planning Board, Golden Ball Tavernkeepers Trust and the boards of the Weston Historical Society and Weston Land Trust.

PRESIDENT'S PRESENTATION GREAT SUCCESS

We are used by now to the fact that our president, William Martin, is a reliably excellent speaker, always lucid, logical and entertaining. So it was on November 8, 2000 in the Community Room of the Weston Public Library, where Bill Martin, best selling author and pride of Weston, talked on the theme "Back Bay Comes of Age." The event was in celebration of the 21st anniversary of his book Back Bay. Drawing on slides that he took as part of his original research for the book, he took us on a leisurely tour of the Back Bay and its history from mudflats to Hancock Tower, comparing the scenery of then with now. A full house audience warmly applauded the slides and the author's presentation.

Martin's latest book is Citizen Washington, also enjoying a brisk sale. We hope we are not letting the cat our of the bag when we state that he is at work on his next opus, dealing with Harvard University.

Vera Laska

grounds are maintained, on Fridays floors throughout the interior of the fire station and garage are washed, on Saturdays radios are checked, and on Sundays the interior rooms are washed.

Most of the time their daily chores are interrupted by phone calls that are not of a serious nature. Fire fighters receive several phone calls relating to situations like people forgetting to open the chute on their fire place and their room is clouded with smoke, or they may receive a report from someone who has encountered a snake or a bat in their basement. However, their work also entails attending to many emergency situations. Last year, in 1998, there were 526 medical emergencies, 148 car accidents, and 43 fires.

Many town departments are endeavoring to make themselves Y2K ready. One of the largest technological problems that face these departments as we head into the next millennium is the Y2K computer problem. Because the Weston Fire Department has opted not to use computer navigation systems, they should not experience any difficulties that other computer-dependent town departments may encounter. The Weston Fire Department does not utilize a computer navigation system because the town is small enough that they do not need to incur this expense. The only potential problem could result in missed paychecks because financial information is stored on a computer.

The Fire Department has made many changes over the years. They now train in tunnel rescue and high altitude rope work. To assist them in these endeavors, they have a new truck called the "Technical Rescue Unit." This truck is truly of the state of the art. It has everything from high pressured air pumps and heavy duty electric jack hammers to electric jaws of life and a high powered slush pump. This pump is suited for moving hundreds of gallons of water and will be highly useful in current projects undertaken by the Fire Department (e.g., the aqueduct tunnel discussed below). Also inside this magnificent truck are two long cushioned benches with air tanks and masks for each fire fighter. Additionally, a new ambulance is expected to arrive soon. When this occurs, the Fire Department plans to sell one of their older ambulances.

With large high-powered trucks like Engine Number One weighing in excess of 22 tons, the Fire Department needed to make changes, such as installing a floor strong enough to carry the weight of the engine. Adding an entire new garage, new sleeping quarters and more office space made a new addition to the Fire Department.

A current project that the Fire Department is involved in is the replacement of the old aqueduct into an all-new massive tunnel system. This tunnel system is located 400 feet under the town of Weston. Installation of a new tunnel system will allow the town of Weston to pump more water from its reservoir to neighboring cities and towns. The Fire Department has purchased new materials to protect the safety of the construction workers who are working on this project. These materials include special planks to prevent cave-ins and high powered machines to pump water should a massive leak occur.

Our world is rapidly preparing itself to be ready for the quickly approaching millennium. The Weston Fire Department is clearly doing its share to be prepared as well. Thanks to Captain Perrin for sharing this valuable information with me.

Michael Miller
Grade 11.

WESTON: IT IS A QUALITY SCHOOL

Weston High School has one of the best school systems in the USA. The school offers a first-rate teaching staff and a wide variety of courses and extracurricular activities. Because Weston has a very wealthy school system, it allows for many advantages such as a fine technology department and a beautiful campus. In a recent edition of The Wall Street Journal it was named number ten in the nation.

Weston High School is a high-quality school for numerous reasons. In most people's eyes the academic aspect prevails above all else. Weston has been near the top in Massachusetts in the percentage of graduates going on to four-year colleges. Weston consistently scores among the top public school rankings for SAT scores. For the class of 1999, the average verbal score was 605 and 627 in mathematics. Because it is a small school, the classes are smaller, which allows for more individual learning. A skills center is available at all times for anyone who is having difficulty with the work.

Aside from the academics at Weston, the extracurricular activities and sports offered accommodate every type of interest. Such sports as soccer, field hockey, football, wrestling, basketball, swimming, track, and lacrosse are offered. For those who do not participate in sports, many other after school activities are available. Theater arts, music, art, and publications are some of the more popular ones, although many more are available.

Another advantage of Weston are the excellent special facilities open to the students. A library with more than 20,000 books, two networked computer laboratories, a modern language laboratory, a recorded books library, a snack bar, and a physical fitness room are available to the students. In addition to that an indoor swimming pool and a synthetic surface track are a part of Weston's sport facilities.

Weston also offers minority students from Boston the opportunity to attend Weston High. The METCO program has been bussing students in from Boston for 32 years. It is an excellent program that allows students who ordinarily would not be able to attend a school of the same caliber as Weston to get a superb education.

Weston is an excellent school by all standards, but the students have varying opinions on it. Most students feel that they are receiving a good education at Weston but they do not like how small the school is. Because Weston only has 497 students, many kids feel there is not enough diversity. At the same time, kids like the safe and generally friendly atmosphere of the school.

In conclusion, Weston High is an excellent school. Almost everyone who graduates goes on to a four-year college, and the SAT scores are above average. In addition to the outstanding teaching staff, many fine facilities are offered as additional learning aids. The extracurricular activities are suited for all tastes, and the athletic amenities are top notch. Open to Weston kids, Boston kids have the opportunity to attend as well. Hopefully Weston will maintain its level of superiority for years to come, so the students of the future can receive the excellent education Weston has always provided.

Chris Wentworth
Grade 11.

RECENT GIFTS TO THE W.H.S. MUSEUM COLLECTION

In the recent weeks the Museum of the W.H.S. enjoyed a windfall of gifts from generous donors who were thoughtful to realize that it would be the proper repository of their memorabilia.

We received a child's school desk set, a toy guitar, a "Class Book" with photographs and various Town Reports from Mr. Henry Lingley; see his random recollections above.

The Weston Red Cross, alas, has disbanded, and we inherited their files and numerous photographs through the kindness of its last president, Mrs. Peggy Dugas.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mosher donated to us 44 photographs in excellent condition from the estate of Mrs. Margaret Mosher, the well known and popular librarian for many years in our town library.

Many of the Red Cross and Mosher photographs need identification. Kindly consider this an SOS call for longtime residents: please drop in at the Museum any Wednesday between 10 and 12 a.m.; maybe you can help us identify some of the photos. It would be a great help.

We thanked each of the above donors separately; here we wish to acknowledge their generosity and cooperation for their contribution to our collection.

Vera Laska
Museum Curator

MUSEUM REPORT

On the occasion of the Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, December 7, 2000 at 4 p.m. in the Josiah Smith Tavern, curator Vera Laska of the Museum in the same building offered a short guided tour of the premises with a progress report. Since there were several new members of the Board present, she also included the highlights of the Museum's work since she had been entrusted with the job of curator in the two rooms. This might also serve as a record for our historical file:

Dividing the first room with a standing room divider; first half for exhibits, second half for work room;

Clearing the Jones Sisters' (second) room, setting it up without clutter as a typical 19th century room; furniture cleaned; pictures hung, including the Henry Davenport painting of Weston in winter, a donation from Mr. and Mrs. George Fogg; acquisition of 9x12 rug, etc.

Curtins hung on all windows;

All artifacts catalogued by group of volunteers, each item on a card;

Sorted out for separate sections: books, documents, photographs, in charge of Laska, Henderson, Amadon respectively; Pam Fox organized photos;

Purchased 5 bookcases, catalogued all books in sections: Town Reports, Weston, New England, Other, Technical, Bulletins; bookcases assembled by Amadon & Henderson;

Purchased 2 exhibit cases, with glass covers, assembled by Amadon & Henderson; contents arranged by Henderson & Laska;

Had 2 exhibit cases made by Weston carpenter David Ott, contents by Laska; glass covered; these 2 and the above 2 have built in lights.

Title index prepared of all BULLETINS by Laska;
Photo album arranged with record of people and events of the W.H.S. (Laska)
Introduced Guest Book for all visitors & volunteers;
Prepared 2 sets of all BULLETINS, complete, have them bound, by Laska;
Purchased and mounted 2 standing flip-flop display stands by Laska;
Made order in attic, a depository of Dickson & Dickson-Lucas books and extra Town Reports and BULLETINS, Henderson & Laska;
dto. in an upstairs room, full of odds and ends, mostly Henderson;
Bought U.S. Flag, displayed when Museum open;
Collected all maps in a closet, not sorted out yet;
Sorted out a big box full of Town Crier phots, by Amadon (most without identification, alas!)
Arranged yearly Open Houses, in May, with or without refreshments;
Catalogued several dozen ladies gowns, mostly in boxes upstairs;
Laska & Henderson;

WESTON 2000, Millennial Exhibit in March, 2000 at Weston Library, in the Gallery and Community room; in preparation for over two years; Laska, Barbara Coburn & Anna Melone, with help of numerous others, all listed on the exhibit program and the BULLETIN;
residue from the exhibit to the W.H.S.: 2 tables, 2 beautiful, large glass covered horizontal exhibit cases, all in the shed next to the work room (no other space), plus ALL artifacts, photos, etc. of the exhibit (without the art work), so that the exhibit or its parts can be used again. Secured cooperation of Weston Arts & Crafts, High School, musicians, press, dozens of Weston organizations, etc.

In the works now:
labeling of all documentary files with help of recently hired assistant, Lauren Fercucci;
indexing the BULLETINS' contents by assistant (part time);
accessioning files of disbanded Weston Red Cross;
curator of necessity continuing as corresponding secretary.

WE DESPERATELY NEED MORE SPACE, SO WE COULD EXHIBIT MORE OF OUR TREASURES! IT IS YOUR MUSEUM - COME AND VISIT!

JUST FOR THE RECORD

At the Town Meeting on November 13 and 14, 2000, the office of the Weston Town Administrator was voted to be replaced by that of a Town Manager. Organizational changes that this imply were detailed in the Town Crier and the Globe.

The Town Meeting also approved (barely) the renovation and expansion of the Town Hall to the tune of $5.69 million. The voices of opposition claimed that there is sufficient space in the Town Hall for all, with 200 square feet per each of 27 employees, and that the addition to the building would detract from its historical beauty.

After an interesting debate, the library trustees were exempted from the Town Manager's approval of their hiring or firing of library employees, thus gaining a kind of autonomy.

Regrettably only 5% or 344 of the 7,191 registered voters showed up at the Town Meeting on Monday, and only 3% or 210 on Tuesday.

Vera Laska

Anna Dolores Melone

INTRODUCING: Anna Dolores Melone

Anna D. Melone was born at the historic Melone homestead, which was part of the Sears estate, at 27 Crescent Street in Weston. She and her seven siblings attended all Weston schools. During her high school years she was active in the Student Council and sang with the SuLizAnna Trio at graduation. She studied with a scholarship at Boston College, gaining a B. S. degree in nursing, and an M. S. degree from the School of Arts and Sciences. She has two Nurse Practitioner Certificates, worked as a visiting nurse in Weston and taught at Lasell College and Boston College. Currently she is Nurse Practitioner at the Littleton Family Medicine Center. She is an active member of St. Julia's Church in the Sodality, as a lector, choir member and participant in several committees. She is a member of the Wayside Inn Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the secretary of the Weston Historical Society. She lives next door to her place of birth, at 29 Crescent Street, in the house originally built by Edmund Sears for his chauffeur, Isaac Comeau and his wife Theresa.

She wants to thank the Weston Police and Fire Department for their help and her many relatives and friends for their prayers after her 1999 car accident; they all contributed to her miraculous recovery.

DUES ARE DUE

Annual dues for the year 2001 are now past due. Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your check to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, MA 02493. If you are in arrears for the past year, it would be kind of you to rectify this by enclosing the same amount for that year, too.

* * *

O tempora, o mores! Quote from the Globe (11/22/00, p. E-1):
"Teenagers may be having intercourse less these days, but they are also 'hooking up' more - and earlier."

Another change affecting all of us: the price of a stamp for a first class letter is going up to 34 cents. This is the 18th raise since the 2 cent charge in 1885. It used to be 5 cents in 1963, 20 cents in 1981 and 33 cents since January 10, 1999. Are we getting better service for our money?

In a recent poll the following presidents came out on top: Washington, Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt. No Clinton in sight.

In a charity ranking recently the Salvation Army came out on top as recipient of donations, with $1.4 billion (b as in boy!), just about double the amount of the next YMCA and Red Cross.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: Once Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

OFFFICERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At the November 8, 2000 annual meeting of the Weston Historical Society the following officers were re-elected and elected:

President:	William Martin
Vice President:	Vera Laska
Secretary:	Anna D. Melone
Treasurer:	Harold Downing

Broad of Directors:

3 year term:	2 year term:	1 year term:
Barbara Coburn	George Amadon	Peg Curtin McDonald
Hal Downing	Pam Fox	Samuel Payson
Vera Laska	Richard Harding	Debbie Toppan
William Martin	Douglas Henderson	
Anna D. Melone	Joseph Sheehan	

BULLETIN Editor
Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 2001 Volume XXXII, No. 2

DANCING CHILDREN, a 40 inch hydrocal sculpture by DOROTHY WELFORD of Weston, adorned since 1969 the tall window of the Brook School Apartments. It delighted all who passed or drove by for many years, then it was destroyed by unknown vandals. To preserve the likeness of this joyful image, part of this photograph is placed in the Community Center by Weston historian Dr. Vera Laska.

A BOOK IS BORN

I had been researching Weston history for several years before I gave any thought to writing a book. My first work in that area was done shortly after I moved to Weston in 1991, when I volunteered to help the Weston Historical Commission prepare information forms on houses in the Case Estates area. In 1993, I was hired by the commission to do a comprehensive survey of the town, co-funded by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The purpose of these surveys is to identify historic buildings and sites within a community and, armed with this information, to help the local commission set up goals and priorities. Since that time, I have continued to work as a consultant for the Weston Historical Commission and administrator of its historic marker program.

When the Weston survey was completed in 1994, the commission decided to sponsor three lectures on Weston history beginning with the early settlement and concluding with the turn-of-the-century estate era. I purchased copy equipment to make my own slides, thus beginning the process of collecting images of Weston buildings and events. These images come from dozens of sources, including institutions such as the Weston Historical Society, which has a fine collection. I began to use the Society's photographs more frequently, I volunteered to develop an organizational system based on family name, geographical location and subject matter.

About this time, I took a short computer course in Photo Shop at Weston High School. The class was encouraged to bring in photographs to use for practice, and I arrived with a wonderful early 20th century photograph of a child pushing a toy baby carriage. Sarah B. "Sally" Gilman, a professional photographer living in Weston, was also enrolled in the class, and we explored our common interest in old photographs. I was beginning work on the Historical Society collection, and Sally volunteered to help. The two of us met weekly for two years sorting photographs, placing them in archival-quality plastic sleeves, and organizing them by category into new, acid-free file folders. Sally estimated that we each spent over 200 hours on this project.

Meanwhile, the first lecture series was enthusiastically received, and for several more years I gave three lectures a year on Weston topics. These required additional research, as I explored neighborhoods like Kendal Green and estates established by men and women like Robert Winsor, Horace Sears, General Charles Jackson Paine, and Marian Case. I wrote about the Winsor Estate for the *Weston Historical Society Bulletin*, and this article later became the nucleus for one chapter in the book. I spent hours tracing chains of title at the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds in Cambridge and pouring over assessor's records in the town hall vault. I was able to track down grandchildren and great-grandchildren of estate owners and estate workers, and they shared their family collections of photographs and memorabilia. Kendal Green residents came forward with photographs of the organ factory. Owners of historic houses shared their records and visual images, as did several local business owners.

I kept buying more filing cabinets and began thinking about writing a book. In the fall of 1996, I completed another volunteer project serving as principal author of the town's study, "Open Space and Recreation Plan." While I had never written anything like a history book, I felt that the materials I had been collecting were worthy of publication. While Weston's early history was recorded by Col. Daniel Lamson in his *History of the Town of Weston*, the late 19th and early 20th centuries were not well documented. Brenton H. Dickson's books *Once Upon a Pung* and *Random Recollections* provided wonderful anecdotes and insights into the period, but were never intended to be a complete or systematic record. I enjoy

Summer (left) and John Bryant Paine, sons of Weston estate owner General Charles Jackson Paine, with the model of a sailboat, reflecting the family's favored sport. Photo courtesy of Thomas M. Paine.

Pastoral scene from old Weston, from the archives of the W.H.S.

working in history after about 1850 because of the availability of good documentation in the form of written records and photographs.

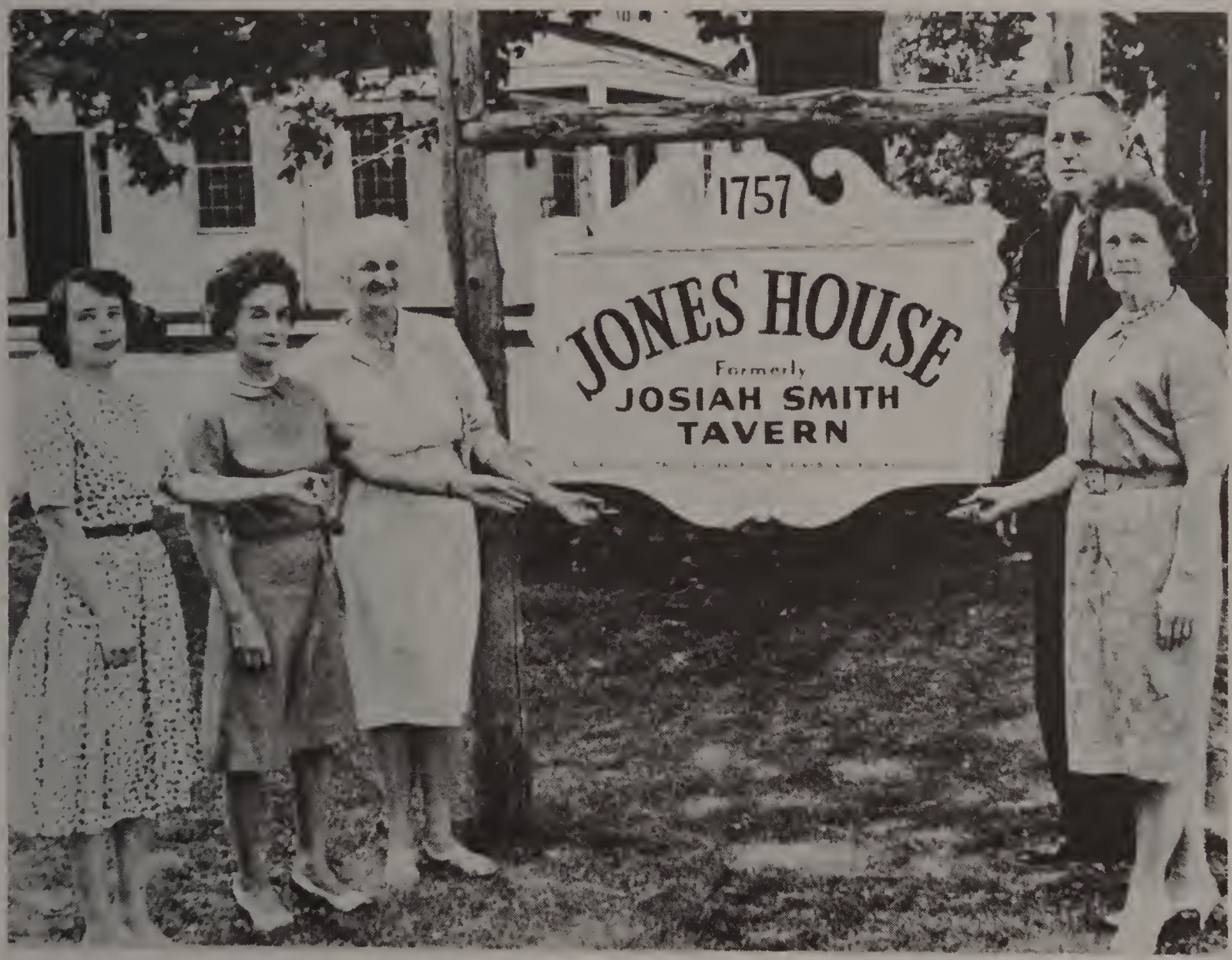
In early 1997 I attended a program on 20th century history sponsored by the Bay State Historical League. The purpose of the five day-long sessions was to encourage historical societies to think about collecting 20th century materials and telling the story of the more recent past through exhibits and publications. One of the speakers, historian and author Sam Bass Warner, spoke specifically about writing local histories of the 20th century. I went to speak to him after the program and mentioned that I had been thinking about a book but envisioned it organized geographically—in terms of neighborhoods and sections of the town—rather than in the more traditional way, by time period or subject matter. He said to me: "This is your book. You're doing the work. Write it as you see it."

I began by writing up the lectures from previous years and then selected new neighborhoods to explore. The last 21 chapters of the book, beginning with Kendal Green and ending with the Wellington and Blaney properties on Wellesley Street, were all written before chapter 1 to 9. These opening chapters are organized chronologically and were added for two reasons: to provide an overall context for understanding neighborhood development, and to allow me to explore topics of town-wide importance like governmental structure, public health and safety, transportation, agriculture, community organizations, and so forth.

Farm Town to Suburb is heavily footnoted. Local history abounds with "factoids," a word I use here to denote concepts that come to be regarded as facts, not because they are true, but because they have been endlessly repeated. I expect that I will not be the first or the last local historian to repeat something that is not correct. I would, however, like my readers to know the source for my information, so that they may explore further and make their own judgements as to accuracy.

At the end of each geographical chapters is a list of individual houses by address. This is not intended to be a list of significant Westn buildings but rather was begun as a way to streamline the chapter text. I know there are many additional houses with historical or architectural merit. This is particularly true of modern houses of the post-war period. I hope that readers will write down the history of their houses and send it to me and to the Historical Society, to be available for future historians.

Photographs are an important part of *Farm Town to Suburb*, and I owe a great debt of gratitude to Sally Gilman, the book's photo editor. When Sally and I completed work on the Weston Historical Society collection, we began compiling photographs for the book. This process involved copying images from individuals and institutions. The book contains approximately 1000 illustrations, of which over 200 are from the Weston Historical Society—the largest single source. For several years we worked one day a week to organize these images by book chapter. Sally spent many hours in her dark room making "quick prints" in 3" X 5" format, to be used in making the final selections. She then devoted many more hours to making final prints with the best possible technical quality. In cases where photographs were damaged, we used either computer restoration or hand retouching to make repairs. Sally and I went together to area institutions including the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Massachusetts Historical Society, and Jackson Homestead/Newton Historical Society to choose photographs from their collections. We spent many hours debating what pictures to include, and many more hours cutting out over 100 pictures when it became clear that the book would be too long. Her artistic eye, dark room skill, practical advice, editorial comments, and proofreading skills were crucial to the making of the book.



At the 1964 open house of the Weston Historical Society in front of the Jones House are, from left, Mrs. Edmund U. Ritter, Mrs. Henry W. Patterson, Mrs. James E. Frazer, curator, Mr. Harold "Red" G. Travis, president, and Mrs. F. Leslie Ford.

Farm Town to Suburb is being published by Peter Randall of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In addition to his publishing business, he is an accomplished photographer who has written the history of his own hometown. He specializes in local histories and was responsible for publication of the recent histories of Waltham and Lincoln. The book will be printed in Hong Kong. The cost of publication is being underwritten by the Golden Ball Tavern Museum with the help of nearly 150 sponsors, including individuals, businesses and institutions, who have contributed between $125 and $2500 and will receive special leather-bound editions. The 9" X 12" book will be printed in hardcover only and will have approximately 670 pages. Copies of the book can be ordered through Love Lane Press, 98 Love Lane, Weston, MA 02493. The cost is $65 plus $3.25 MA sales tax and $7.00 shipping and handling, for a total of $75.25. Checks should be made payable to Love Lane Press. We anticipate that the book will be available by the December holidays.

Pam Fox

In the summer of 2001, Dr. Vera Laska, editor of the Weston Historical Society Bulletin, asked me to write about the making of my book Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, Massachusetts, 1830 - 1980. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Weston Historical Society board, particularly Bill Martin, president, and museum committee members Vera Laska, Douglas Henderson and George Amadon, for their help in making materials available for research and publication.

Pam Fox

Weston's youngest author, Laura M. Caso

THE YOUNGEST WESTON AUTHOR

It is 2001 and I'm in the 6th grade. In June 2000, my first published book came out—it was the happiest moment of my life. Having a book published is hard work: here is how it happened.

In fourth grade we had the author, Jeff Kelly, come into my school. He has written three books about life. The an illustrator came and showed us how to make illustrations from construction paper. As the year was coming to an end, my teacher told us to write a paper on the up-coming summer vacation. So, when my family and I went to Italy to stay with my grandmother, all of a sudden I came down with chicken pox. Soon after my sister and brother got the same thing. I remember how miserable we were, because we were not allowed to be in the sun, let alone play with my grandmother's dog outside. Remembering what my teacher had told me, I began to write down my experience with the pox and also began to make illustrations to go with the story.

Back in Weston, my parents invited my American grandparents for dinner. When my grandfather asked us what we had done over the summer, my sister, my brother and I each told him about our projects, and we all read our stories. But other than saying he liked all of our three stories, he didn't say much more. It came as a surprise when, some time later, he said he would be interested in publishing my story, if I worked on it hard in re-writing it and in re-making better illustrations. I knew my grandfather's company had published hundreds of books and that he himself had written many of his own books; but I never expected him to tell me that he would publish my very own book.

For the next several months, I visited my grandfather's home. With the help of my grandmother Margaret, a retired teacher, we worked hard in re-writing the text and in re-doing the illustrations. Her help was certainly invaluable; now I know how to form a book. Finally, I presented the final copy to my grandfather, and the rest is history. On seeing my

book, people now say it was much more than family love for him to publish the book.

I like having a little bit of fame. In fact, on the Internet—Amazon.com—five stars appear next to my book. I have also gone to a couple of schools to give a talk about my book and plan to do another one soon for first graders. Something that really makes me feel known is when fans, whom I don't even know, send me letters saying how great it is to be a published author at eleven. That is something that really makes my day.

It is hard writing, but I always seem to have my pencil tip sharpened and ready to write. In the future, I hope to publish many more books; but for sure, my next book won't be on chicken pox, unless I become a doctor!

Laura Caso

Laura A. Caso was born on July 17, 1989 and is the grand-daughter of author and publisher Alfonso Caso; both live in Weston. Laura's hobbies are soccer, swimming, acting, singing, and of course writing. We shall be hearing about this energetic young lady in the future! You can get her book, Chicken Pox Explosion! at Weston's Dragon Books (Boston: Brandon Books, 2000; 30 pp., $7.95, illustrated). Ed.

MEMORIES OF "THE REC"

Memories are made of this, that and other things and often hazy; yet for me these snapshots in time for the most part seem clear and vivid. So goes my memory of the Riverside Recreation grounds — fondly called "The Rec" — along the Charles River in Auburndale. That's how I remember The Rec, but in fact most of its territory is in Weston.

Back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when I was 11, 12, and 13, Summer was lazy and hazy. We had three whole months off from school with nothing to do but read Nancy Drew books, go swimming, bike to the playground for gimp (arts and crafts), softball, archery, and other pastimes, and eat sandwiches at picnic tables. Our days were unscheduled and left up to our own, hopefully honorable, devices. Transportation was primitive: walk, ride your bike, or roller skate. Getting a ride in the family car was never an option. That was reserved for visits to Grandma's. My memory tells me that there were many more very hot days back then than there are now, so swimming was often our goal.

The Weston Pool, at the corner of School Street and the Boston Post Road by-pass, was always first choice, because I knew all the kids there. But because it was not big enough for everybody who wanted to use it, the town set aside times according to age, sex, and purpose: boys under 12, girls under 12, boys 12 and over, girls 12 and over, adults, swimming lessons. So even when combining swimming lessons and fun time, girls my age could only swim at the Weston Pool three to five times a week, during the morning or afternoon only. So what to do the rest of the time? If you lived near the Auburndale part of the Charles River, you went to The Rec.

To get there we walked up Auburn Street toward the back side of Auburndale Center, took a right on Charles Street and continued to the end of it, climbed the hill to the railroad tracks near the canoe factory, walked a bit down the tracks, ran down the other side of the hill to where the big gingerbread boathouse sat beside the Charles River, walked behind it, went through the opening, and – wow! – beheld the wonder before us.

Besides a ballfield, picnic areas, walkways, and benches, there was, in my estimation, the biggest pool in the world. In fact, at 50 meters long and 35 meters across, it was the largest pool in New England. The pool had a dark wooden surround, anchored at one end with the finest cabanas ever, each the size of a small hotel with two or three stories, executed in

Richardson style architecture. The effect was overwhelming. At the other end there were three spring diving boards staggered across the deep end and at different heights, the highest one reaching up to the top of the trees. What a sight to see an actual mortal spring off that high board and jack knife or somersault into the pool. What raw courage!

Although my goal was to try it someday, that remains unfulfilled. But all these years later, I can still feel the excitement of watching in wonder what to me was a breathtakingly daring feat. You see, years later I became a swimming teacher at the Weston Pool and in the course of my duties I had to teach basic diving off a platform. However basic that was, every child in my class who dove into the water from the side of the pool was in my imagination coming off that high, high, high, springboard at The Rec.

I recall it costing five cents to swim at The Rec for the day, which seemed to be no discouragement at all. The Rec always was teeming with people, in the pool, around the pool, on the diving boards, in the cabanas, paddling the canoes, on the ballfield, at the picnic benches, near the river's edge. They were everywhere. When I first went there as a young girl, the sheer size of the pool and its environs and the number of people were intimidating — yet it quickly became a whole lot of fun for my sister, our friend, and me.

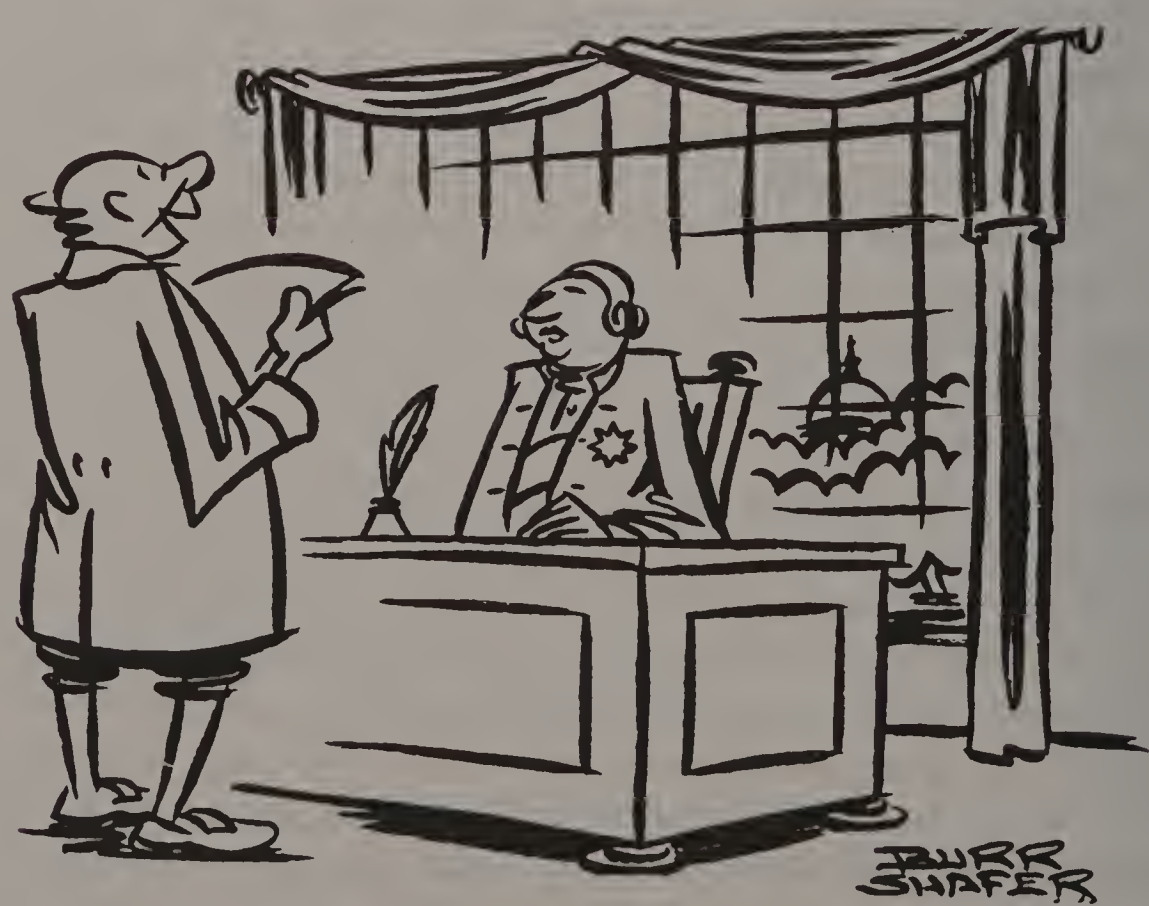
Sadly, my childhood is not the only part of these memories that has ended. On May 10th, 1959, what was left of The Rec burned down in a spectacular fire which we could see from our house, about a half-mile away.

Still, almost fifty years later, I do not know how to drive a car to that spot. It seems to me that we crossed the river to get Auburndale and then crossed the river again to get back to Weston.

Please, do not ask for directions.

Peggy Curtin McDonald

Peggy C. McDonald has lived in Weston since age ten. She graduated from Weston High School and received her Bachelor's Degree from Regis College, majoring in English. She was at one time a swimming teacher at the Weston pool. She is now an editor at an art publishing company. She makes her home in Weston.



"Now, my idea, Your Majesty, is a stamp tax for the American colonies—
it will be painless and easy to collect."

EARLY DAYS - RANDOM MEMORIES

My father met my mother while he was working on the Paine Estate as a chauffeur, and she was working as a cook for the Dicksons.

I was born at 12 Highland Street in 1914. I was delivered at home by Dr. Frenesius F. Van Nuys, who came to the house in his horse and buggy. In the winter he would make his visits using a horse and sleigh. During my early childhood, we had no electricity, phones, indoor plumbing, or heat. A woodburning stove in the kitchen was the only source of warmth. Needless to say, that was where we spent our time when indoors in the winter.

As children, we managed to fill our days without television, videogames, or movies. Much of our time was spent in the woods. We did a lot of hunting, fishing, and trapping. We swam in the Baptismal Pond, which was located near the current police station.

In the winter, we'd break apart a wooden barrel to use the staves as skis, attaching a strip of leather to hold them on. We liked to go sledding at the Morrison Estate, which is now Regis College. Starting at the upper part of the grounds, it was a nice long ride to Wellesley Street. We would ask a sleigh or pung driver if we could hook our sled on the back to get a ride. Most were glad to accommodate us.

As Christmas approached, we'd take a sled and saw into the woods and cut down our Christmas tree. Decorations were simple: popcorn, cranberry, and paper chains. As there was no electricity, candles were used to light the tree.

In the winter there were no vehicles on the road. The roads were shoveled by hand. Jimmy Anza plowed the sidewalks with a wooden snowplow drawn by two horses. The Ogilvies had a sawmill. They used the first power snowplows in Weston, attaching a plow to a logging tractor.

I graduated from the Weston High School in 1932. There were 26 students in my class. I remember that the boys had to wear a tie to school. Mr. Eaton was the principal. Everyday he would enter each classroom and say: "Good morning, boys and girls". We would have to stand and say: "Good morning, Mr. Eaton". Everybody took a lunch to school. In cold weather, Moms would put warm biscuits in their children's mittens to keep their hands warm on the way to school. Then they'd eat the biscuits at lunchtime. Some pranks played in school (of course not by me, I just observed!) were: a snake in a girl's desk, thumbtack on chair, aspirin in inkwell that would foam up, and an empty liquor bottle in Miss Constance Burrage's desk.

I worked as a water boy when there was roadwork being done on route 30. I would go down to Oak Street, pump a pail of water and deliver drinks to the workmen. They all used the same dipper. When the water got warm, I'd dump it out and fetch more.

When automobiles became increasingly popular, I had a job standing on the back of a truck and shoveling sand onto the road after snowstorms.

For several years, I helped harvest the ice from Foote's Pond. I was the last iceman to deliver natural ice in Weston. The ice house was destroyed by fire (see Fox article above).

I remember: Selling a 250 lb. pig for 5 cents per pound; the price of steak at the market was 25 cents for 2 pounds; gasoline was selling 8 gallons for a dollar.

I helped my father plant the trees on the left side of Newton Street between Wellesley and Ash Streets. They still stand today.

I was a member of the volunteer fire department. We did get paid 50 cents an hour. I helped fight the fire that destroyed the Brook School in 1948.

After spending the first 85 years of my life in Weston, I have recently moved to California.

As I approach the first winter of my life without snow, I'm glad to have all the memories of a beautiful town filled with many wonderful people.

Henry Lingley

Mr. Henry Lingley recently donated to the Weston Historical Society Museum a charming small school desk with chair, several Town Reports, a "Class Book" from the 1950s with photographs and a toy guitar. I went to pick them up from his former residence in Warren Lane from his grand-daughter. His garage held an amazing collection of tools, dozens upon dozens of hammers, screwdrivers, pliers, and other handymen's paraphernalia - he was a collector of them all. They must be worth a fortune to some other aficionado. I suggested that Mr. Lingley might write down some of his memories of his lifelong residence in Weston, and the above charming vignettes are the result.

In her letter accompanying them, his daughter Kate Lingley wrote among others: "Dad is living in an assisted living facility similar to Sunrise in Weston. His mealtime tablemates are slowly learning all about Weston. I know Dad misses it much more than he usually admits."

His grand-daughter told me that Henry Lingley's father John came from Nova Scotia, his mother Hilda from Sweden. Henry Lingley was a Jack of all trades, gardener, landscape worker and for many years in the trucking business in Weston. A number of oldtimers I talked to knew him. All four of his children went through the Weston school system up to high school. About that charming little school desk set: it most likely came from the Brook school, as much of the furniture from it after the fire had been trucked away to the dump.

We are most grateful for Mr. Lingley's donations to our Museum and for sharing his fond memories of the days gone by in Weston. We wish more people would follow his example.

Vera Laska

WESTON 2000 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY WINNERS

In the Spring, 2000 issue of the BULLETIN we printed one of the three high school winners' essays, namely Joseph Hassell's "The Weston High School Pond." What follows are the essays of the other two winners, Michael Miller's "Technology in the Weston Fire Department" and Chris Wentworth's "Weston: It Is A Quality School." Ed.

Technology in the Weston Fire Department

Captain Perrin of the Weston Fire Department was interviewed on November 16, 1999. He provided information pertaining to how the Fire Department is becoming technologically advanced and also discussed the day to day operations of Weston Firefighters.

Recently the fire department has participated in a new work schedule which significantly changed their work week but not their roles and responsibilities. Weston firefighters now work 24 hour shifts for three days a week on an eight day rotation. This means that every eight days the three days they work are changed. Their daily activities have remained the same. On Mondays engines of the truck are checked. This includes the fire engines, ambulances and service trucks. On Tuesdays, the S.C.B.A. (self contained breathing apparatus) is inspected, on Wednesdays the basement is cleaned, on Thursdays the outdoor

A MEMENTO FROM OUR FILE, MARCH 1968

HISTORY PAPER - Harold G. Travis, president of the Weston Historical Society, accepts a research paper compiled in conjunction with the Weston History Project being carried out by Regis College students. Making the presentation is Miss Catherine Imbriglio. Looking on are Dr. Vera Laska of the History Department, supervisor of the project, and Regis College Academic Dean, Sister M. Flavia. Dr. Laska states Miss Imbriglio compiled an index card catalog of the archives located in the Town Hall of Weston. "I believe the enclosed work is a laudable contribution to the worthy cause of history, and embodies the cordial relations between Town-Gown in the historical community of Weston," commented Dr. Laska.

TRUST IN HIM

THE GOOD LORD GIVES US FLOWERS BRIGHT
AND DEEP PURPLE SHADOWS FALL AT NIGHT

HE GIVES US GRACE TO HANDLE ILLS
BLUE GREEN PONDS AND ROLLING HILLS

OUR LOVER'S CHARMS ARE OUR DELIGHT
A WARMTH TO LOVE IN EARLY LIGHT

KNOWING HE WATCHES OVER US
WE PLACE OUR LIVES IN HIS GOOD TRUST

George F. Amadon

Polly Dickson with her sons Edward H. Dickson, Jr. and Carl B. Dickson; Polly Dickson is holding the artistic rendering of the future Dickson Meadows.

DICKSON MEADOWS

Dickson Meadows, Weston's mixed income condominium community on Livermore Lane off Highland Street, will be completed and occupied by the end of 2001, five years after we started planning it. In those years Ed's and my dream has become a reality, and it will remain a legacy of his love for Weston.

Background

When Ed graduated from secondary school in 1930, Weston had 3327 residents in 773 homes. It was a small town where most everyone knew each other, and its people came from various backgrounds with different levels of income. The average assessed value of its homes was $10,518. By 1960, when Ed and I were married, there were 8261 people in 2376 homes, and the average assessed value of a home was $10,903. (This would be market value at that time of $21,000 since assessment was at 50% of market.) By 1990 the population was 10,200 and the average assessed value per home had jumped to $555,000 (market). The decrease in affordable housing was becoming a concern for many people in Weston.

The first efforts to alleviate this problem were directed toward seniors and handicapped: Brook School apartments were started in 1979 and Merriam Village soon after. In the early 1990s the selectman appointed a Housing Needs Committee to study the need for affordable housing. The committee proposed a 24 unit family housing development on town-owned land off Merriam Street near Sunset Road. After considerable opposition from

neighbors the town withdrew the plan. At a hearing when this plan was discussed one neighbor said something which Ed and I listened to carefully: why should not there by multiple housing in other parts of town? Their neighborhood already had Merriam Village. Ed and I said to each other, why not have affordable housing on Livermore field, our hayfield nearest to town?

Beginnings: 1997

In early 1997 we gathered a small group of residents who were knowledgeable and concerned about affordable housing, several of whom had served on the town Housing Needs Committee or had other expertise. They became the "team" or Advisory Committee which has been meeting regularly for five years to bring about the creation of Dickson Meadows. It could not have happened without them. Team members in addition to Ed and me were: Bob Brown, Ken Fish, Ed Lashman, Cam Searle, and Eleanor Searle. We decided to build on the work of the Housing Need Committee and its conclusion that mixed income development under chapter 40b, the so called "anti-snob zoning" law, was the most feasible way to achieve affordable family housing. Winter Gardens, the first development of housing under this law in Weston, had just been completed.

Carl Dickson lending a helpful hand with the first shovel of earth in the planting of the elm tree in memory of Edward H. Dickson.

The next steps were to select a developer, donate the land, and draw up plans. For developer, we chose The Community Builders of Boston (TCB). Next Ed and I donated 11.23 acres to TCB for construction of an 18 unit mixed income housing complex. Although both Winter Gardens and the Sunset Road plan had 24 units for 6 affordable homes, we hoped that the gift of the land would make it possible to have 6 with only 18 units. To

A house under construction at Dickson Meadows.

qualify to buy an affordable unit, the family's income must not exceed 80% of the median income for the area. A deed restriction would be placed on the houses to assure continuing affordability in perpetuity. Ten of the houses were to be sold at market prices, and we hoped it would be financially feasible to have the remaining two offered at a moderate price with similar restrictions. With land, a plan and a developer we were ready to seek permission from the town to proceed.

Approval Process (11/97 - 4/99)

From the fall of 1997 to the spring of 1999 this plan went through the permitting process, when the plans were presented to the various town bodies and became public.

The first obstacle was a little known clause of chapter 61a, the law that allows real estate taxes to be deferred on farm land as long as it is so used. This clause states that the town has an option to buy farm land for conservation if its use is being changed from farming. This was the first opening used by opponents of the plan to try to stop it. From January to April, 1998, the selectmen listened to our plans and to the opposition and finally came to an agreement to allow us to proceed as long as one of the selectmen could be part of the development team. Betsy Nichols joined the team as selectman and has been an invaluable member ever since, continuing to be designated after she was no longer selectman. This agreement had two parts; first, the Board of Selectmen waived their option to purchase the property for conservation, as they too were concerned about the need for affordable housing in Weston. Second, they agreed to sign our application to the State to develop under chapter 40b through the Local Initiative Program. This was important for approval, since the State prefers to have support of the local government, if possible. So the support of the Board of Selectmen was essential to the fulfillment of this project.

The next step in the permitting process was going before the Board of Appeals, the body empowered to grant approval for building, since the development is not subject to local zoning restrictions. The application was submitted in the fall of 1998, and hearings were

held in January, February, and March. The final decision to approve the plans and allow us to proceed was dated April 26, 1999. Throughout the appeals process Dickson Meadows benefitted greatly from the support of hundreds of residents of Weston who expressed their support to us and to the selectmen and the Board of Appeals through letters and calls, as well as attendance at the meetings and hearings. There was a substantial snowstorm on the night of the January hearing, and we were concerned that attendance would be sparse. On the contrary, over 100 people attended, and about 90% were supportive. Both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Appeals became aware that many Weston residents wanted this development to happen, and I believe were influenced by these expressions of support. Democracy was working.

During the summer and fall of 1999 we were concerned with finalizing plans, choosing a contractor, preparing legal documents to assure that the six affordable units would continue to be affordable, and conducting the lottery for those units.

Acorn Homes was chosen to be the architects as well as to supply the material for the houses they designed. We chose them because they are known for siting the houses sensitively in the surroundings, and because we thought that precut material would be assurance of standardized quality. All the houses were to be similar, whether market or affordable units. Each one would have three bedrooms, two and a half baths. We adopted three different designs and made several field visits to see the models completed. Architect Doug Govan situated each of the houses on the sites, and landscape architect Thomas Wirth prepared a plan for landscaping the whole development. At the request of several town officials we included an open meadow of 2.25 acres with houses located in a horseshoe shape around it.

The lottery for choosing the occupants of the affordable units was started in November, 1999, when over 180 families applied. After the numbers were drawn, Assistant Town Administrator Donna VanderClock continued for months the process of verifying the eligibility of those who drew the lowest numbers. Eligible families had to be families of at least three members, at least one of whom was a child under 16. They must also be first time home buyers with limited assets. Separate lotteries assured preferences for minority and Weston connected families.

Construction and Occupancy

The last phase of this story is bittersweet for me because Ed did not live to see it completed. Construction of the road and infrastructure began in late 1999, and houses were started in February, 2000. A Celebration of Construction was scheduled for April 19, 2000. Ed knew that ground had been broken and had seen the invitation to the ceremony, but he didn't get there: he died on April 10th. The Celebration then became a continuation of the celebration of his life which began at his funeral on April 15, and a tree was planted in his memory on what will be the open meadow.

Gradually the houses are being finished, sold and occupied. The first resident moved in November 2000 and by September 2001, people will be living in 13 of 14 of them. The last to be completed will be the two duplexes on Highland Street, possibly by the end of the year. These will include the moderate priced homes.

Concluding Reflection

Ed and I and our children gave this land and worked for the creation of this development in the hope that Dickson Meadows will become more than eighteen individual homes, that it will be a community where people live close enough together so they will know each

A ready house at Dickson Meadows.

other as neighbors. We also believed that everyone should have a home, and the increasing number of homeless people was appalling to us.

But our overriding reason was that Ed believed strongly and I continue to believe in the value of a diverse community. Ed had always had friends in Weston from many backgrounds, and his life was enriched by them. In the past ten or fifteen years many of these friends had to move away for financial reasons. The Weston he grew up in and served all his life was becoming very homogeneous. In the process of helping bring this project to reality we learned that many Westonites share our concern, and that the town officials heard their voices. Our effort is small in relation to the need; however, we hope others will be encouraged to continue to help people with limited resources live in Weston.

Polly Dickson

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, Polly Dickson worked as a social worker for ten years before she was married to Ed Dickson in 1960. From 1960-80 she was a wife, homemaker, and mother to four children. Later she had various positions, paid and volunteer, connected with social justice work of the church.

Here Stood a Mighty Elm

Here stood a mighty elm
Sturdy and strong as he presided over this forest
Tall and proud as he resided on this commanding hill

Here he was raised in this beautiful forest
In warm, rich soil, blessed by so many
This was a community, a village
His roots grew deep and broad

He lived for this forest
He tended to its land
He made it his work to conserve
His sweat and blood renewed its soil, its essence
An essence of community, of humanity
His heart never wandered
His mark can be found all over
This forest

Now buds the spring
Birds sing, flowers bloom
Rain renews and refreshes
But on this elm, no leaves sprout, no blossom
No bolt of lightning, but age has overcome

And yet he stands
He remains with us
We who grew beneath the limbs
And emerged from the protective shadows
We still see him right where we have always looked for him

We stand beside him today
He stands with us, in us, always

This poem, written by John Dickson, son of the late Ed Dickson, was read April 19, 2000 at the dedication of an elm tree planted at Dickson Meadows in memory of his father.

MEMORIAL DAY 2001

Welcome to the 122nd consecutive Memorial Day Exercise in the Town of Weston. We are fortunate to have the Middlesex 4H Fife and Drum Corps with us again today. We shall now hear a selection from the corps.

We are gathered her today to honor the memory of those who served in the American Armed Forces to guard us from aggression. We salute the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Special Forces, plus the peace keeping groups of the world. May they obtain success!

We remember with gratitude those who served with valor at Louisburg, Yorktown, Aisne Marne and Gettysburg, from Pearl Harbor to five miles in the air over Tokyo, to 200 feet beneath the cold Atlantic, to Vietnam, Korea and the Gulf.

We honor those who served, those who were killed in action, who were wounded, all who returned to us, and those who have left us.

There appear to be few documents that have survived concerning Weston's involvement in the Civil War. I have recently located one event that might be of interest to you.

When word was received that private Ralph Adams Jones, 17 years of age, great great grandson of the builder of the Golden Ball Tavern, lost his life at Antietam, where 23,000 men were either killed or wounded in one day, the Reverend Calvin H. Topliff, pastor of the Baptist Church, was appointed by the town of Weston as a committee of one to travel to the battlefields and return the remains of the men of Weston who died there. It was the practice of the Union Forces to bury their dead in shallow graves near the battlefields.

When the family at home were notified of the death of a relative, an embalmer could be contacted at the battleground, that they wished to have their family member embalmed and shipped home by freight car. In those days before dog-tags were in use, it was somewhat difficult to identify the deceased. It was best not to open the coffins.

The cost of Reverend Topliff's travel expenses, embalming, and return of the deceased was about $125 each; the Town of Weston covered the expenses.

Within the Union Forces eight Weston young men were killed, including Ralph Jones; three died of wounds and one died in the notorious Andersonville Confederate Prison. All are buried in the older section of Lynwood Cemetery.

In the records of the Baptist Church was found a statement made by an elder of the Church as follows: "Weston owes a debt of gratitude to the Pastor of this church for creating a healthy influence and inducing men to enlist to preserve this country from the impending overthrow."

We will now recite the Pledge of Allegiance found on the back side of your program. I shall now turn over the program to Beverly Dillaway, Chairperson of the Memorial Day Committee.

Thank you!

George F. Anderson
Memorial Day Committee, 2001

INTRODUCING

Pam Fox

Pam Fox was born in Roslyn, New York and grew up in Rye (NY), Houston, and New Orleans. She graduated from Radcliffe College in 1971 with a B.A. in art history. She and her husband, Michael, met in college and lived in Hanover (NH), Rochester (NY), Providence, Boston and Main Line Philadelphia as he trained as a pulmonary doctor and later entered the pharmaceutical industry. In 1978 Pam received an M.A. degree in Preservation Studies from Boston University. Over the next 20 years she worked as a preservation consultant, initially full time and later part time after the birth of her three children, Laura, David and Danny. She has done consulting projects for the Boston Landmarks Commission, the township of Lower Merion (PA), and other cities and towns.

In August, 1991, Pam moved to Weston, where she has focused on preservation of historic resources and open space. These ten years in Weston are the longest she has ever lived in the same place, and studying the community has helped her put down roots. In 1993-4, she conducted a comprehensive survey for the Weston Historical Commission—the beginning of research into Weston history that culminated in the book *Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, 1830-1980*, to be published in the late fall of 2001 (see article in this issue). This is the sixth year she will be offering a lecture series on the town's history and architecture. Pam is a member of the Weston Planning Board, the Weston Historical Society and Weston Land Trust boards, the Golden Ball Tavern Museum tavernkeepers, and serves as a consultant to the Weston Historical Commission.

THANK YOU NOTES

Since we do not have a membership secretary at this time - and would more than welcome a volunteer! - we take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all of our wonderful members who in addition to their dues sent in on time added an additional voluntary contribution. Please know that your gifts are deeply appreciated and put to good use.

We also wish to welcome our most recent life member, Mrs. Laura Trowe Bookman of Weston. We encourage our members to consider a life membership; in the long run it may save you many dollars. Ed.

CORRECTION

Experts inform us that the truck pictured on the front page of our Spring, 2001 BULLETIN is not a Model A but a Model T Ford. Sorry about that. Ed.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

OFFFICERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President: William Martin
Vice President: Vera Laska
Secretary: Anna D. Melone
Treasurer: Harold Downing

Broad of Directors:

3 year term:
Barbara Coburn
Hal Downing
Vera Laska
William Martin
Anna D. Melone

2 year term:
George Amadon
Pam Fox
Richard Harding
Douglas Henderson
Joseph Sheehan

1 year term:
Peg Curtin McDonald
Samuel Payson
Debbie Toppan

BULLETIN Editor
Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 2000 Volume XXXI, No. 1

WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

With the cooperation of the
Weston Arts & Crafts Association
proudly presents

A MILLENNIAL EXHIBIT

WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN

documenting the recent past and the present of Weston, Massachusetts in words and images. Two years in the making, it represents the cooperation of dozens of town organizations from the cultural, artistic, educational, religious and commercial walks of life. Schools, clubs, churches, women and conservation groups, museums and businesses are represented, framed by illustrative samples of Weston's art community. This is a Weston mosaic of words, photographs and art, a once in a millennium event, displaying the POTRAIT OF WESTON – a chance not to be missed.

WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Gallery and Community Room

Wednesday, MARCH 1, 2000 to Wed., MARCH 29, 2000
Open to the public during library hours free of charge.

GALA OPENING

and reception with refreshments
7 p.m. Wednesday, March 1, 2000

WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000

WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000

LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

On the title page you see the announcement of the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN project. This is a program of your Society. We need your moral support. We operate on a shoestring, and it is unlikely that we could afford a townwide mailing of this announcement.

For that reason, we ask you to talk about this program with your friends, especially in any group(s) that you belong to. Please ask your minister, club president, chairperson of your group to announce it at your meetings to the membership, or even better, to print it in any newsletter, bulletin or material mailed to the membership.

Publicity for WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN is essential, and YOU CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE. Feel free to xerox the flyer on the front page, or we can supply them.

Your WESTON 2000 Committee has been working hard for two years on this program. Millennia come around only once in a thousand years, and we are lucky that this one happens in our life-time. Let us all pitch in to support its commemoration through WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN, our town, with all the enthusiasm that the occasion warrants!

Please accept the gratitude of your WESTON 2000 Committee,

Sincerely,

Dr. Vera Laska, Chair
for the
WESTON 2000 Committee
Tel. 781-237-1447

Committee members:
- Barbara Coburn
- Elizabeth Drake
- Anna Melone
- Douglas McDougall
- Sheila Patraiko
- Rees Tulloss

Treasurer: Harold Downing
Photographer: Andrew Laska
Consultants:
- George Amadon
- Douglas Henderson

Hostesses: Mimi Hastings
Gene Gastillo
Charlotte Jacobs

Exhibit Consultant:
Laurel Nilsen, Director
Wellesley Historical Society

MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2000, 7 P.M.

FOR THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN IN THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY!

WESTON TIME CAPSULE

We still have some space in the Weston Time Capsule. Let us have your suggestions on what should be included in it for posterity. It should be opened by Westonites in a hundred years. Share your ideas by sending a postcard to the Weston Historical Society, P.O. Box 343.

SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN

Plans for the Gala Opening program of WESTON 2000 are still under wraps, but to give the Weston Historical Society members a foretaste of it, here is the list of the main points in the program:

Amusing readings from Once Upon a Pung about Weston of yesterday;
Awards for 3 winning essays about Weston
Awards for outstanding "One Square Mile" projects
Piano concert by Maestro Arthur MacKenzie with some surprising numbers
After the program live background music by piano and violin by renown professional musicians

SPECIAL THANKS will be acknowledged on the program notes for specific support to the following individuals:

Gloria Bachman
Colleen Egan
Stanley Jakuba
Jane Kim
Ruth Leiby
Bill Livingston
Roy MacDowell
David Mareno
Judy Markland
Robert Walker

Paramount thanks to Lauren Nilsen, Director of the Wellesley Historical Society, our exhibit consultant, whose professional help and wise advise guided us from first concept to installment.

The WESTON 2000 committee is expressing deep gratitude for the neighborly understanding and financial support to the following organizations:

Chestnut Shop
First Parish Church
Friends of Weston Public Library
Gifford School
Golden Ball Tavern
League of Women Voters
Leiby's Garden Shop
Methodist Church
Prime National Publishing
Regis College
Richardson Drugstore
Rivers School
St. Julia's Church
Weston Baseball League
Weston Community Children's Ass'n.
Weston Conservation Commission
Weston Historical Society
Weston Travel Service
Women's Community League of Weston
Women's Community League Garden Club

THE ONE SQUARE MILE PROJECT

In our Fall, 1999 issue of the BULLETIN we presented to you the interesting and laudable "One Square Mile Project" under the direction of English teacher Mr. Robert Walker at the Weston High School. We came upon the project too late to be able to include illustrations, but this year we managed to get some samples, courtesy of Mr. Walker, who is an inspiring teacher, indeed.

Following are samples in art form by the students, all eleventh graders, of their concept of a square mile space in Weston. These and additional samples will be included in the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN exhibit this coming March at the Weston Public Library.

Nature in two media: 1. charcoal, 2. crayon, by Courtney Couper

Two concepts of a view, traditional and modern, by Cora Zimmerman

Cover page of illustrated research paper, "Types of Trees" by Catherine Sharp.

Joseph Hassell

THE WESTON HIGH SCHOOL POND

For my "Weston 2000: A Portrait of a Town" project I have chosen to present facts about the pond located at the high school at 444 Wellesley Street. The pond is an important addition to the landscape of the beautiful high school grounds and it is also the only man-made body of water in a public area of the town.

This pond was constructed in 1964. Originally proposed by the landscape architect as an esthetic and serene addition to offset the practicality of the various sports fields surrounding it, the pond has served many additional purposes over the 35+ years that is has been there.

Every season, there is something spectacular happening at the pond. In the fall, before flying south for the winter, flocks of geese make their home at the pond. They return home every spring to dip and glide in the pond or walk along the water's edge with their newly hatched goslings. The bright red, yellow and gold colors of the leaves reflected in the calm surface of the pond are a breathtaking sight and a contrast to the lush green leaves of the trees from the summer months. On a hot summer day, many people take advantage of the quiet and privacy that the pond offers to bring a picnic lunch and enjoy the sun. There are numerous lily pads that seem to grow more numerous each year, and often a big bull frog can be caught napping on one, or waiting for some insects to fly by for the makings of a hearty lunch. Although there is ice on the pond during the coldest part of the winter, there is no skating on the ice.

Dogs who are lucky enough to be brought to the pond by their owners can enjoy a swim or a game of fetch and spend enjoyable moments getting exercise running around the pond while their owners run around the track. The high school football field is also nearby.

The pond is approximately 100' by 50', and while there is no swimming or boating allowed, every spring the Weston Rotary Club sponsors a fishing derby. The pond is stocked with fish for this event, and many families come to compete for the prizes and enjoy a day of fishing.

Naturally, there are many stories that have been told over the years about what "other" things may be in the pond. One is a real "fish story." Do you believe that five years ago a group of boys caught a large goldfish in the pond? Well, believe it or not, the story goes that they sold that goldfish to a local pet store for $350! Interesting.

There are also many legends that continue to be told about the pond. It is possible that there is a car at the bottom of the pond. A Volkswagen beetle is rumored to be there, driven in by a student back in the 70s!

Until recently, there was a "rite of passage" that all incoming freshmen boys at the high school were tossed in the pond. The senior class would pick an afternoon in the fall, and every freshman would have a turn at being tossed into the pond – not a fun experience, if you ask me, at least not for the freshman.

The Environmental Science class at the high school uses the pond as a classroom learning center. The interesting plants that grow there are beneficial to our environment, and understanding their importance is helpful to students.

So next time you are looking for someplace peaceful and nice to visit, remember the pond. There is a lot to see, and you can gain a real appreciation for the beauty of this town. It is all around us.

Occasionally, while rehearsing a play, the drama students will be seen at the pond studying their lines or taking a break.

I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the Weston 2000 project because it presented an opportunity to look at the town where I live and to learn something new. Talking to people who have information that they want to share is a good experience.

Joseph Hassell

This sensitive and perceptive vignette of Weston was one of the three winners of the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN essay contest in Mis Jane Kim's 11th grade history class in the Weston High School. We congratulate Joe Hassell for his talent and for his precise English. The essay will be part of the WESTON 2000 exhibit. The two other winning essays will be published in our forthcoming issue. Ed.

THE MILITARY BACKGROUND OF THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH BELL

On September 6, 1775 the infamous colonel Benedict Arnold reviewed his 1000 troops – among them 18 Weston men – on Cambridge Common. He had just been appointed commander of the Kennebec Expedition by George Washington. The expedition's aim was for General Richard Montgomery to come down from Fort Ticonderoga, capture the British Fort of St. Jean, then Ville Marie, now Montreal, and join Arnold on the Plaines of Abraham.

General Montgomery was a former British officer and had fought the French with the famous General Wolf who had defeated the French forces on the Plaines of Abraham, a large, relatively flat area west of the walled city of Quebec. The plan was for Arnold and Montgomery to make a two-pronged attack upon the Base Ville (lower town) of Quebec.

It was believed that if both of these, Ville Marie and Quebec, were captured, the French would support the Americans and assist in driving the British forces out of Canada. Canada would then become a part of the United States.

Arnold marched his troops to Newburyport where they embarked for the Kennebec River and sailed up it as far as they could navigate. At that point they transferred into 20 foot flat bottomed bateaux, flared sided boats made of green wood.

It was intensely cold that fall and winter, and the men suffered from the freezing water, swampy terrain and difficult long portages. All their supplies had to be carried by hand. At one point, three days were spent traversing waist high water. They were helping each other to survive, when general orders were issued for every man to save himself and abandon the stragglers.

Arnold and his survivors finally reached Point Levi across from Bas Ville of the walled city of Quebec around the first of November. They secured their boats and canoes and ran a blockade to land on the shores of the Plains of Abraham.

Later in the month General Montgomery arrived at the Plains of Abraham after they had captured the British fort of St. Jean just over the border north of Ticonderoga and the unwalled village of Montreal (Ville Marie). Arnold's troops were in a sorry state lacking supplies and suffering from the cold, wanting to return home. General Montgomery with his leadership skills managed to keep the forces together.

The troops waited while scattered fire from and to the walled city caused casualties on both sides. It was decided that the main attack should take place during the first large storm, when the defenders would be less effective. On December 30, 1775 a great storm came out of the northwest with heavy snow and strong winds. It was the storm that they had been waiting for.

General Montgomery and his troops traveled down a path below the walled city of Quebec towards Bas Ville. At a point called Près de Ville, the British had set up a redoubt containing a six pound cannon. Montgomery and his staff walked up to this gun, not being able to see it in the heavy snow. The British fired grape shot and killed or wounded the leaders of the attempted incursion. General Montgomery was killed. The surviving American armed forces retreated.

Colonel Arnold took a route taking him along the east wall of Quebec trying to get around into the Bas Ville. Unfortunately the British learned of this plan; alarm bells rang in the city, and a withering fire engulfed Arnold's troops with no place for them to seek protection. Arnold himself was carried off to an American hospital. Without the assistance of Montgomery's men and with Arnold's men in complete retreat, the hope of capturing Bas Ville and eventually the town of Quebec was lost.

Ironically, on January 14, 1776 while Arnold was recuperating, he received a letter from George Washington congratulating him on the presumed capture of Quebec and promoting him to Brigadier General.

The early intelligence gathering of the American Continental Army was just as poor as it was during World War II, particularly from Japan. Before the combined attack upon Quebec occurred, a contingent of 200 trained British troops under the command of Colonel Allan MacLean had just arrived from England; a quarter of the Americans captured by the British enlisted in MacLean's British corps of Royal Emigrants. It was said that the French Catholic Bishop was pro-British and threatened excommunication of anyone supporting the Americans.

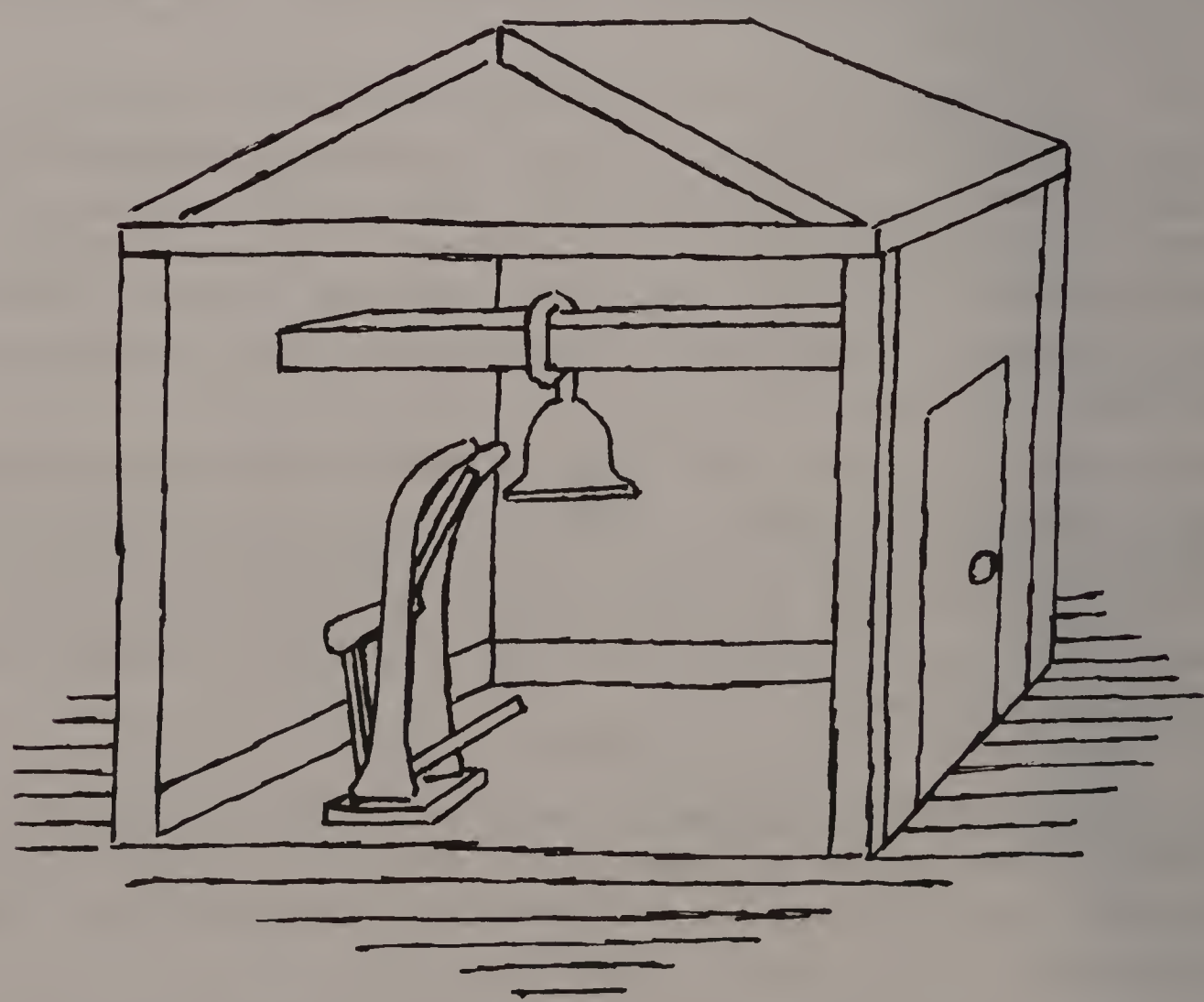
General Arnold's troops lived under trying conditions and threatened to return home. General Arnold pleaded for additional troops so that he could attack the Bas Ville once again. This dream ended on June 15, 1776 when it was reported that Bergoyne with a strong force was approaching Quebec. Arnold and his men made a hasty retreat by boat across the St. Lawrence, then down the Richelieu River to Lake Champlain and eventually reached the safety of Fort Ticonderoga.

*****

In time the eighteen Weston residents, who went to Canada with General Arnold, were released from duty and in some way managed to return to Weston – with a surprise! They had "liberated" a small bell from a French Catholic chapel and carried it all the way back to Weston.

The eighteen Weston men were: Converse Bigelow, John Warren, Jr., James Cogswell, Samuel Danforth, Thomas Rusell, Jr., Paul Coolege, Benjamin Bancroft, Ruben Hobbs,

The bell in the left top corner of the photo; tight space in the bellhouse prevents a full picture.



Cross section of bellhouse wth the liberated Canadian bell and striker; drawing by Meredith Lightbown of Weston.

Samuel Train, Mathew Hobbs, John Hagar, Benjamin Rand, William Helms, Daniel Sanderson, John Baldwin, Elias Bieglow, John Stimpson and Lemuel Stimpson. For their nine months service they received 6 pounds, 6 shillings and 8 pence, as allowed by the General Court.

The bell was approximately 20 inches in height and 14 inches in diameter at the base and weighed some 164 pounds. It was offered to the town by the 18 veterans. However, budgetary problems prevented the town from accepting the gift, and nothing was done until the year 1782 when the town finally decided to accept the bell.

The bell was hung in a bell-house, probably to the right in front of the second Meeting House said to have been erected in 1721, and at the direction of Reverend Samuel Woodward, a Congregationalist. It made a happy sound, calling the congregation to worship, or in clanging a sound of alarm. After several years, a device was developed out of cast iron about six feet high. When a pedal was stepped upon, a striker would contact the bell causing it to peal.

This grand Canadian bell was in use until around 1880, when restorations were made on the second Meeting House; a belfry was constructed for the new bell which weighed in at 997 pounds and was cast by Paul Revere and Sons in 1881 at a cost of $443.12. The older Canadian bell had been given to The Revere Company which extended a $72.88 credit towards the new bell. The Revere bell has rung a happy sound ever since.

To complete the story, a wealthy benefactor in the town of Weston in 1883 donated a tower clock to the town; the First Parish Church seemed to be the best site for it, and it was installed there. In 1961 a public subscription was made towards the purchase of an electrically powered tower clock, and it was soon placed within the church tower. When the new Unitarian Church was constructed in 1883, the Revere bell and tower clock were installed in it. From that time on the town has had the pleasure of hearing the Paul Revere bell rung on the hour.

I owe much of my research material to The Life of Benedict Arnold by Clare Brandt, (New York: Random House, 1994) and to material given to me by the late Mary Maynard, able chronicler of First Parish Church history.

George Frazee Amadon

THE "WILD MAN" FROM BORNEO

One sunny summer afternoon, when I was a small boy, my Uncle Harry visited us. I remember that visit, not only because Harry was a very large man, but because he entertained us by playing the banjo, and singing. The only song I remember was a repetitive additive rhyme in the style of the nursery verse about the house that Jack built.

This song began "The Wild Man from Borneo has just come to town" and then added wife, child, dog, cat, hens. Of course I had no idea where Borneo was but it sounded exotic, and the image of a wild man caused chills. This scene came back to me recently as I went about my work of ordering the files of the Weston Historical Society. There, among a number of miscellaneous papers, was a typed sheet, yellowed with age, without a signature or date, bearing the title WILD MAN OF BORNEO.

I reproduce it here in its entirety:

It was on March 16, 1905 that Wano, one of the erroneously dubbed "Wild Men of Borneo" succumbed to a long illness at the home of his guardian, Hanford A. Warner on Crescent Street.

Innumerable legends had been established here surrounding the antecedents of these two brothers of diminutive stature who had in a sense become world celebrities over a period of almost half a century. Some of the stories circulated about them were indeed ridiculous to an extreme degree, and the Warner family, all of which were highly respected here in Waltham, were from time to time subjected to rude annoyances on the part of certain individuals who persistently sought an interview.

As a matter of fact these two little men, who during their youth adopted the names of Hiram and Barney Davis, were possessed of kindly natures, and their one desire, following their retirement here, was to spend their retirement years in privacy, for they no longer sought any glaring publicity and resented any further attempts to exhibit themselves as curiosities. It should be strongly emphasized that they were not fakirs or freaks and their long careers within the entertainment world were marked by exemplary conduct and dignity, all serving to endear them to their managers and professional associates.

The story runs that "Wano" and "Plutano," to make use of their stage names, had been captured by a trader in the Dutch East Indies probably about 1850 when they were of youthful age, and that in due course of time they were engaged by the Barnum Circus, with which organization Mr. Hanford Warner was prominently associated in some sort of publicity capacity.

During the period immediately following the Civil War these two "Wild Men" (and it is hard to imagine a more inappropriate designation) visited almost every state in the Union, and at a later period they were exhibited, along with other circus celebrities, in England and France.

When Mr. Hanford Warner retired and returned to Waltham accompanied by his two proteges, in 1886, the family resided for a time at 623 South Street; later, following a brief stay in Weston, the family purchased a house then numbered 297 Crescent Street, and Mr. Warner's son, Ernest, became engaged in the boat making industry. But father and son bestowed unremitting kindness upon these two little men and exercised throughout their lifetimes a benevolent guardianship over their affairs.

The present writer recalls seeing one of them sunning himself on the front porch of the Warner home during the time of his high school days; a lonely, rather pathetic figure, dressed in native costume, with an expression of sadness discernible upon his bearded features, to indicate, perhaps, that his thoughts had drifted far afield, in the direction of that South Pacific wilderness where he was born.

These two brothers were closely attached to one another, Plutano in fact, never became reconciled to the death of his brother in 1095 and passed away aged 80 on May 31, 1912, following a period of declining health. There both lie buried in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. It should be noted that they were slightly under 4 feet in height but that they were possessed of extraordinary strength, and it was due to these characteristics associated with their physical aspect and skill as entertainers that they became recognized presently "among the best known, most widely travelled circus performers in the world."

Douglas Henderson

MEMORIES... MEMORIES...

The Weston Senior Citizen's Club recently held an essay competition, with entries in three categories: Adventure, Memories and Mystery. The winner in the Memories category was the following essay by lifetime Westonite Elsie Cooke, a youthful octogenarian of cheerful disposition. Ed.

Close your eyes and let your mind wander back to the early 1900s and relive with me my early years.

I was born in 1910 in the house across from the one where I live today, on North Ave. There were six of us kids – four boys and two girls – plus "Ma" and "Pa." We ate around a large kitchen table, except on Sundays, Thanksgiving and Christmas, when we had "dinner" and used our best tableware and table manners!!

We all went to the little North School on North Ave., and Miss Lissie Viles was my teacher for three years, then on the bus to the center of town for the 4th grade through High School. Alice Ayer and Betty Otto Rafuse lived in this neighborhood, and we can remember trudging to school in the winter behind Harold "Toe" Coburn driving his horse and plow. Coming up Viles St. we could see Miss Viles wading in the snow up to her knees. We often coasted from the school house down the hill across North Ave., down Viles Street, sometimes to the railroad tracks – if the snow was hard enough.

Stoney Brook ran behind our house, and it was our play yard in the summer time. We made our own rafts, swam all day long, pulled blood suckers off our legs and enjoyed our vacation. I also had a trip or two to Norumbega Park, riding on the merry-go-round, the caterpillar and had fun in the Penny Arcade.

In 1918, the year of the First World War, we sat on our front steps and watched the trucks going up North Ave. to Camp Devens, loaded with caskets for victims of the "flu epidemic." My brother Harold was the only one in our family to contract it and mother saved his life with her union poltices – I can still remember the smell!

I can see North Ave. being paved – first time I think – and Silas Small from Silver Hill was driving the big steamer roller. I remember keeping my distance from "that thing," I didn't want to fall under it!

We had a jitney for a short time – the route was from Waltham to Lincoln and back to Waltham. It went through Silver Hill, down North Ave. and cost 15 cents from our house to Central Square in Waltham. Movies cost 10 cents, and we often sat through two shows of the same movie. A whole afternoon's amusement for 50 cents (including jitney and candy).

Until High School we went barefoot all summer around the neighborhood and complained heavily when we had to put on shoes to go back to school; the soles of our feet were like leather.

First day back at the North Ave. School meant a few flowers and a tasty snack for Miss Viles. A young boy named Joe, whose desk was in front of mine, had a nasty habit of spitting on his desk. Miss Viles said to him: "Joe, if you spit on your desk one more time, I'm going to rub your nose in it." Joe looked at her, spit on his desk, she rubbed his nose in it – end of spitting habit!

Grades One, Two and Three at the Old North School, years 1915 and 1916. Teacher: Miss Emma Viles. Back Row: Elsie Foote, Dorothy Vittum, Nora Benotti, Mary Lennon, Laura Feranti. Second Row: Annie Sheppard, Gladys Foote, Beatrice Swenson, Ada Feranti, Thelma Davis. First Row: Allan Garfield, Raymond Vittum, Joseph Nahuminti, Delmo Feranti, Joseph Benotti, Paul Miller.

Class of 1927 – 55th Reunion, 1982: (left to right) Lincoln Smith, Elsie Cooke, Helen Johnson, Charles Pear, Isadore Elwell, Olive Sloan, and Charels Cutter.

On to the "center of town" for the 4th grade through High School. Swam at the town swimming pool – girls one time, boys another – never but never together! In high school - boys on one side of the homeroom, girls on the other – freshmen down front, seniors up back. We even had separate entrances. In the winter we danced in the Assembly Room to the tune of the player piano for 15 minutes after lunch. I took the bus to and from school. If you missed it because you had a "slip" for deportment or poor grades, which kept you after school for 40 minutes, you had a two and a half mile walk home – only fun when you had a "special" boy to walk with!

I graduated in 1927. We were the first class to graduate from the Town Hall. The School hall was too small – 19 in my graduating class. I then went on to Chandler Secretarial School, graduated, got a secretarial position and left my childhood behind – I was now an adult!

Elsie Cooke

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Below are the scores of the 1999 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) examinations of fourth, eight and tenth graders in Weston and statewide. "A" is advanced, "P" proficient, "NI" needs improvement, "F" failed (under 220), "F/T" failing/tested, "F/A" failing/absent. These tests were introduced statewide in 1993. Source: Massachusetts Department of Educaiton, published in the Boston Globe, December 8, 1999, pp. C1, 3, 7.

Grade / Subj.	% of students A	P	NI	F	'99 av. scaled score	1998 scaled score	No. of pupils enrolled	Percent tested
Statewide								
4 English	0	21	67	12	231	230	78,841	96.1
Math	12	24	44	19	235	234		97.3
Science	10	46	36	9	240	238		97.3
8 English	3	53	31	13	238	237	73,021	95.3
Math	6	22	31	40	228	227		96.5
Science	5	23	27	45	224	225		96.2
History	1	10	40	49	221	NA		96.0
10 English	4	30	34	32	229	230	63,183	92.6
Math	9	15	23	53	222	222		94.1
Science	3	21	39	38	225	225		93.8

Grade / Subj.	% of students at each level A	P	NI	F/T	F/A	Ave. scaled score	1998 scaled score	No. of pupils tested
Weston								
4 English	3	46	50	1	0	240	238	188
Math	33	34	30	4	0	248	244	188
Science	23	60	15	2	0	249	241	188
8 English	15	69	15	1	0	249	250	137
Math	23	45	23	9	0	245	251	137
Science	16	41	27	15	1	240	242	137
History	1	20	57	21	1	229	NA	137
10 English	14	55	23	8	0	244	245	114
Math	39	26	21	13	0	248	246	114
Science	8	39	40	13	1	236	237	116

Top ten school systems are:

Harvard	2204	Wayland	2191
Wellesley	2201	Belmont	2186
Weston	2199	Hamilton-Waltham	2184
Lexington	2198	Newton	184
Medfield	2194	Winchester	2182

Also of interest to us in Weston in this millennial year is the result of a survey run by the Children's Rights Council. Based ont he criteria of child abuse, high school dropout, child poverty and infant mortality, the number one state in the union to bring up children is Maine, with Massachusetts ranking second. The five best are: 1. Maine, 2. Massachusetts, 3. Connecticut, 4. Vermont, and 5. New Hampshire. (The worst: Washington, D.C.)

THIRD WORD HEARD

Oh, the vagaries and caprices of the English language! No wonder that "Johnny can't spell!" As a friendly reposte to the editor's verse by an anonymous author in the March 25, 1999 Town Crier, dealing with the treacherous spelling of English, came the following witty poem by Westonite Louise Lind. What a treasure trove of talents flourish in our town! Ed.

"When the English tongue we SPEAK"
I hear that PIQUE will rhyme with FREAK.
"Will you tell me why it's TRUE"
We can rhyme a ZOO with FEW...A COUP! ADIEU!...?
But the founding of a VERSE
Must never rhyme a NURSE with WORSE.
A BIRD his spring song's welcome WORD,
A CORD to BOARD and THIRD with HEARD.
A COW won't PLOUGH, take DOUGH in TOW,
You SHOE needs GLUE, while LOW we OWE.
It seems to me we learn by ROTE
The English we pronounce by THROAT.
Why must the letter sounds COMPETE?
See CHEAT, A SWEET, ELITE, RECEIPT!
Schools won't let kids MEMORIZE –
Multiply eights APPLIES.
Perhaps the STATE should get it STRAIGHT–
Basic ED would then have WEIGHT.
All the kids should learn to SPEAK
Our English language so UNIQUE.
And they will know by learning, TOO,
That HIRE the HIGHER makes rhyming STEW.
If kids can't read, speak, spell TODAY.
When chips are down, they'll be PASSÉ.

Louise Lind

WINTER AT MARRIAM VILLAGE

The autumn leaves have come and gone
We no longer hear the robins' song

Sixteen crows black and tall
Sending out their raucous call

The winter wind howls around the house
Disturbing cat Rufus and our house mouse

We snuggle down deep in our covers
Touching our bodies like youthful lovers

The night is cold and long and gray
But brings promise of a finer day

George F. Amadon

INTRODUCING: BARBARA COBURN

Barbara Coburn

Born and raised in Worcester, Massachusetts, Barbara received a Bachelor's Degree from Wellesley College in History of Art. Here she also met her husband, Frederick Coburn, a Weston native. After living in Watertown and Sudbury, they arrived in Weston in 1958. Here they raised five children, who represent the seventh generation of Coburns in Massachusetts.

When the last children started elementary school, Barbara enrolled in Boston University and received an M.A. in Education. Subsequently she taught in the Weston elementary schools for 23 years. During that time, she and her husband were active in the First Parish; family vacations were spent camping and hiking in New Hampshire's White Mountains and on Maine's coastline. She and her husband also took trips to France, Finland, Italy and Greece.

After the sudden death of her husband in 1991 and after the children were no longer at home, she moved to a smaller house on the Boston Post Road. When she retired a few years ago, she became a member of the Board of Directors of the Weston Historical Society and of the Friends of the Weston Public Library and continues to be active at the First Parish Church. Barbara Coburn is also one of the first members of the WESTON 2000 Committee.

During the school year, she tutors in an after school program in Roxbury. For fun, she plays tennis and paints watercolors. Best of all, she can travel during non-vacation times.

MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2000, 7 P.M.

FOR THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN
IN THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY!

WESTON TIME CAPSULE

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TIME CAPSULE: Please let us have your ideas!

QUESTIONS: Call 237-1447, Laska.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, $15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

DUES ARE DUE

Annual dues for the year 2000 are now due. Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your check to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, MA 02493. If you are in arrears for the past year, it would be kind of you to rectify this by enclosing the same amount for that year, too.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

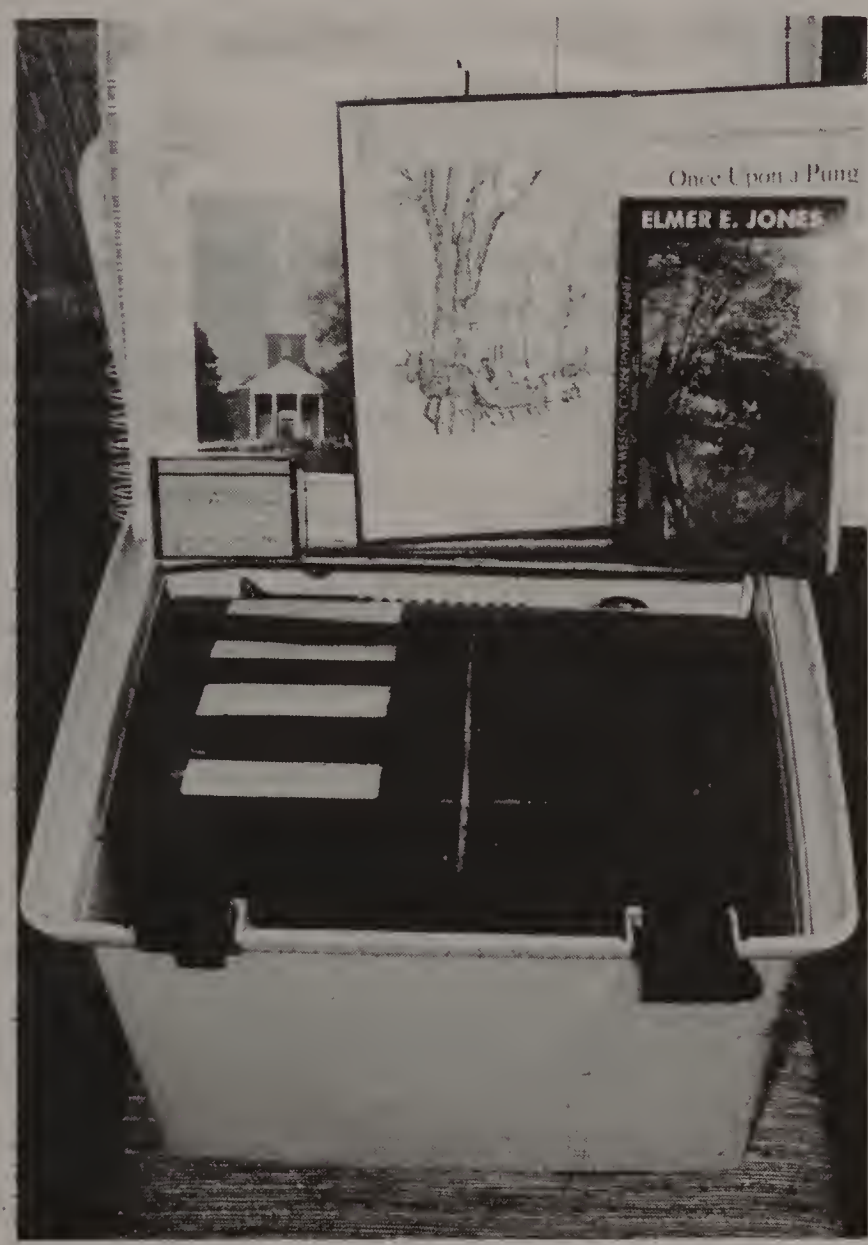
President: William Martin
Vice President: Vera Laska
Secretary: J. Kenneth Bennett
Treasurer: Harold A. Downing

BULLETIN Editor
Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 2000 Volume XXXI, No. 2



This Time Capsule, sealed on May 4, 2000, will be opened by Weston Residents in the year 2100.

TIME CAPSULE SEALED UNTIL YEAR 2100

It was quite an occasion last Thursday, when in a double program the Weston Historical Society solemnly sealed the Time Capsule to be opened by Westonites in the year 2100.

It all happened in the elegant community room of the Weston Public Library. The first part of the program was a slide lecture by Gene Ritvo, the Weston automotive photographer, who talked about the "Images and Legends of the Automobile."

In introducing the speaker, Vera Laska briefly offered a historical background of the automobile and its impact on the manners and mores of America. Especially colorful was her description of the "roaring '20s," which quite erroneously usually carries the misnomer in history textbooks as the time of "normalcy." Instead of normal, this was the effervescent era of jazz, flaming youth, bathtub gin, ragtime, short dresses and long decoletes, a crazy time of Freudian jargon and sex magazines, shortly: a social and sexual revolution.

Anna Melone and Vera Laska sealing the Time Capsule.

Closed cars became rooms on wheels, and young people borrowing their parents' cars parked them on secluded spots. Family ties were loosened and dating rules went out the window to the tune of songs like "I'll Say She Does."

The slide show of cars ancient and modern was fabulous. The photography itself was first class, and the tales that went with the cars highly entertaining. Ritvo really knows his cars and shared with the audience of about 70 people his knowledge and love of the horseless carriages.

We saw cars that belonged to Clark Gable and Al Capone, and about 100 other machines, all in tip-top shape and in all the colors of the rainbow. Both classic car afficionados and others sat spellbound.

Then came the long awaited moment -- the sealing of the Time Capsule, to be opened by Westonites of the year 2100. It is amazing just how much memorabilia could be squeezed into a 9 x 10 x 12 inch box.

Here are the contents of the Time Capsule:

Six "Red Books" from "Weston 2000: Portrait of a Town" exhibit (March 2000); one "Red Book" from same with high school students' essays and art photo album of above exhibit; digital video of above exhibit; Weston Telephone Book; Weston Town Report of 1999; three Weston Historical Society Bulletins, Spring 1994, 1998 and 2000; the book "Once Upon a Pung" by Brenton Dickson; and "Walks on Weston Conservation Land" by Elmer E. Jones; the Weston School Budget 2000/2001 brochure; Weston Finance Committee Report, 2001; New York Times Magazine, April 18, 2000, re: Millennium; Economist Millennial Edition, Jan. 1, 1000 to Dec. 31, 1999; Time Millennial Edition, Jan. 1, 2000; TV Week, April 18 to 29, 2000; GBH, December 1999 program for TV; *Weston Town Crier,* Dec. 30, 1999, including Weston history; black hanging file: c. 100 clippings re: Weston, Mass., USA.

Also, blue hanging file: sales brochures from Sears, Hunneman Real Estate, Omni, Toys R Us, Circuit City, Bradlees, Bloomingdale, K-Mart; red hanging file: letter from Douglas P. Gillespie, chairman of selectmen, letter from Dr. Vera Laska, curator of Time Capsule, Epilog; 2 *Town Crier* items re: Time Capsule, April 13 and 27, 2000; list of books re: 20th century and millennium; attendance list at sealing of Time Capsule; small velvet bag with six U.S. coins, penny, nickel, dime, quarter, JFK half dollar and "gold" dollar, for youngest boy over 16 present at opening of the Time Capsule or in the high school; small white bag with a pair of cultured pearl earrings, for youngest girl over 16 present at opening of Time Capsule or in the high school.

While the audience gathered around, three red seals were placed over the closed capsule by officers of the Weston Historical Society -- Bill Martin, president, Laska, vice president, and Anna Melone, secretary; while all present applauded. The box then was wrapped in double plastic and deposited in the History Room of the library.

Happy 22nd Century, Weston of 2100!

Vera Laska

Reprinted from *Weston Town Crier*
May 11, 2000, pp. 5 & 9.

The following is an expanded text of William Martin's opening remarks at the Weston 2000 exhibition, delivered on March 1, 2000 at the Weston Public Library.

I am an historical novelist. This means that, like most writers, I spend my day at a computer. But my computer often feels like a time machine to me. In the course of my career, I have ridden my time machine back to Pearl Harbor, back to the tough immigrant streets of Boston's old South End, to the decks of the *Merrimac* and *Monitor*, to the White House on the day in 1814 that the British burned Washington, to the bloody fields of the American Revolution, and to the shores of Cape Cod as the *Mayflower* first appeared on the horizon.

But sometimes, when my work is going slowly, I focus the time machine on places a little closer to home. Usually I start right there in my office, and set the dial for 1925.

Suddenly, I'm sitting in an apple orchard on Glen Road, and a man named Jennings, who owns the orchard, is building seven houses there. It's one of the first housing developments in Weston. Of course, he cannot anticipate that a stock market crash is coming, and he will find it very difficult to sell those houses at the exhorbitant price of $27,000.

Then I fly a little higher and head north, traveling farther into the past, to the year 1900. Below me is the Byron Estate, an enormous and beautiful example of the life that a handful of wealthy men made for their families in what was known as Weston's Estate Era.

I continue flying north, toward Route 117 and the year 1890. There below me is the Hastings Organ Factory, the largest structure ever built in Weston, except perhaps for the Campion Center and a few private dwellings put up in the 1990's. The Industrial Revolution has come late to Weston and it will not stay long.

I now turn back toward the center of town, back to the town cemetery in the year 1863; there below is a funeral procession. The body of a man named Cutter, embalmed by one of the intinerant undertakers who followed the armies from one battle to the next, has been placed on a train in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and returned to his home for burial. He is one of twelve Westonites to die in the Civil War.

Now I travel farther back into the past and I notice something that I've been seeing more and more plainly as the years fly by: there are fewer and fewer trees on the landscape. The Weston that we know today has about twice as much woodland as it did in 1800, because that Weston was an agricultural community. In those days, you could stand on a promontory near the Wayland border and see across the rolling pastures and fields all the way to Waltham.

Finally, I set my time machine down in front of the Josiah Smith Tavern, where, incidentally, the Weston Historical Society maintains a small museum and archive. I set the machine for July 3, 1775 and I wait. The day is hot. The sun is warm. Soon, I hear dogs barking and I look west along the Post Road, and through the rising dust, I see him. He's a big man, young and vibrant, dressed in a blue and buff uniform, and he makes a fine impression on horseback: George Washington on his way to take command of the Continental Army in Cambridge.

Riding beside him is his second-in-command, Charles Lee, a British soldier-of-fortune who thinks that he would make a better commander than Washington. He also takes pride

in the fact that he prefers the company of dogs to men. Hence the barking we've been hearing. Riding behind Washington are his two secretaries, young Philadelphians named Joseph Reed and Thomas Mifflin. Before it's over, Reed and Mifflin will desert Washington. Lee will defy him. And yet, Washington will soldier on through eight long years of Revolution, as inexorably and irresistibly as he rides down the Boston Post Road on that July morning.

The point of all this is that even when we are talking about a piece of ground as relatively small and as seemingly mundane as Weston - and we all know that Weston is not mundane - we are talking about a place where time has left its mark and history has written its message.

We are all inextricably linked to the past - to our communal past, represented by George Washington and all that he did once he had passed through Weston, and to our private pasts, to the decisions of ancestors whose names we may not even know, and even to the decision of a farmer named Jennings to build houses in his orchard so that I could come along and buy one of them sixty years later.

Through our programs, and in our archive and museum, we in the Weston Historical Society seek to keep alive our links to the past, because without a knowledge of those links and an understanding of the past, we are weaker as individuals, as a community, and as a society.

We also seek to celebrate those links, and this evening is one of the biggest celebrations we've ever staged, so let it begin.

William Martin
President
Weston Historical Society

A historical milestone - how time flies! Charlie Brown reaches the ripe old age of 50 (fifty!) on October 2nd, 2000. Does that make Snoopy 350 years old?

THE FOOTE SAGA

See through my eyes ninety years of living in a middle class family, in a middle class neighborhood, in the middle class section of the town of Weston, Massachusetts.

My father, James T. Foote, and my mother were both born in Nova Scotia and both came to Massachusetts, but not together. Mother landed a housekeeping job in Ayer, and father a blacksmith job in Maynard. They kept in touch, and on January 23, 1896 father walked from Maynard to Ayer to marry Maria Arnold, aged twenty-six. They lived in Maynard, where their two eldest sons were born, and then moved to Weston.

My father bought the land at what now is 284 North Avenue from his brother William, who had purchased it from George Garfield, son of the former owner. Will Foote married and moved to Waltham.

Barn built in 1820 by George Garfield who purchased the property from Nathan Fiske and sold it to James T. Foote in 1900. It was torn down about 1914-15, when Foote built his tonic room.

There was a large barn on the property, complete with a water wheel, off Stony Brook. Here were kept cows, pigs and hens, an occasional duck, cats and pet rabbits.

While father was having his house built with the help of relatives from Nova Scotia, he, mother and three sons lived in the "block," a three or four apartment building on Conant Road, owned by Henry Viles. My brother Earle, sister Gladys and I were born in the new house.

I was a brand new baby when my sister climbed up on a bench in the barn, found some matches and set herself on fire; her screams were fortunately heard by my brother Wiley, who was nine years old. He put the fire out with his bare hands; both he and my sister carried their scars to the end of their lives some 70-80 years later.

On the left James T. Foote in straw hat at his pump; second from right the author, Elsie Foote, as a teenager; the grocery (under the "Foote's Cider Mill" sign), and behind the large door the cider mill.

Our brother Harold was the "hard luck" one of the family. Five of us lived charmed lives; brother Earle lived to be a few weeks short of 95, and I do not remember his ever spending a sick day in bed his entire life. It was Harold who fell through the ice in the brook, and father went in after him and pulled him out. Pa could not swim a stroke. It was Harold who ripped his left leg from hip to knee in a coasting accident, Harold who nearly died from the flu - mother kept him alive with her onion poultices. Yet according to Harold, the scariest time of all was flying back to the States after World War II from the Philippines in a small airplane, four feet above the Pacific Ocean! He would never fly again, always driving up from Florida after he retired.

Stony Brook divided father's property. We crossed the brook below the rock dam where it was very shallow, or over the rocks that were part of the stone wall. Across the brook we had the big garden, with all kinds of vegetables, and also currant bushes, strawberry beds and the most beautiful wild flowers you can imagine. The wild geraniums and forget-me-nots were my favorites. Today it is all grown over and there is no way to cross the brook. There used to be several man-made accesses from Conant Road to Viles Street, but no way today to cross over "to see the trains go by."

Father shod Tom Coburn's horses. The hired man, Mr. Hennessey, would bring them up, usually two together, leave them, and when they had their new shoes, father headed them toward the street, slap them on the back, and away they went back to their own barn nearly a mile away!

Horse shoeing in progress - the middle gent of the trio most likely Mr. Hennessey, all under the sign "J.T. Foote, Carriage Smith Horse Shoeing.

When automobiles made their appearance, blacksmithing became a lost art, and father tore down the big barn, built a tonic room on the foundation, and his store, cider mill and a small oil room, all joined together nearer the street. He developed his own soft drink he called Welo, and made his own ice cream. Cider was 25 cents a gallon; one family drove from Worcester every Thanksgiving for their two gallons! We picked apples by hand, mostly from orchards in Lincoln.

The first gasoline pump in Weston was on this property: Standard Oil Company. I remember turning the handle to pump one, two, three or five gallons for a customer at 17 cents per gallon. Mrs. Hastings was a regular customer; I always wondered why she sat in the back seat, while her niece Anna Hall did the driving. Front seat was more fun. Also Harold Coburn (we all called him Toe) would come in his car, drive to the front of the store, push hard with both feet on the brake and holler "whoa," thinking he was still driving horses.

The store was a meeting place in the evenings usually during the winter, for the "local yokels" to play "45," a card game. There was a glass case full of penny candy, wonderland to us kids, groceries, a soda fountain and cider mill attached. The only trouble I remember is when father opened his store on Sunday to sell Sunday papers. One neighbor objected strenuously and did not speak to him again for the rest of his life.. Neighbors got their Sunday papers, however.

My mother was a little woman, 5'2", very shy and a stay-at-home person. Sunday afternoon was her time off, and I can see her now sitting on the front porch, all in white, corsetted to the hilt, while my sister and I played with marbles nearby. She died suddenly in 1931, and I not only lost my mother but my best friend. She was a wonderful mother to all of us six kids.

A couple of years later father married Alice Illsley, another Nova Scotian, and they ran the store together until he died in 1953. My sister Gladys, married and residing in Quincy, was visiting for the day and was in the store, when he came up from down back where he was

burning rubbish, sat on his chair, sighed a few times and died. There were twenty-three automobiles in the cortege going to Linwood Cemetery from Waltham, and two things have always stayed in my mind: one, when we passed the filling station at the intersection of Route 117 and 20, the two employees were standing at the roadside saluting, and when we came to the Weston line, there was the Chief of Police, Sumner Viles, on his motorcycle to lead us to Linwood.

My two older brothers Ray and Wiley married sisters and moved to Waltham. My two other brothers, Harold and Earle, built their store beside the cider mill, and after father's business block was torn down, a filling station took its place. The two brothers went in for a convenience store, sold finger food, coffee, tea, ice cream, etc. Here was a meeting place for the neighborhood. We would collect there every morning for our cup of coffee, a doughnut or whatever. All ten stools would be occupied. They had a good business for twenty years, but finally decided they were old enough to retire and sold out in 1967 to George Gordon, who eventually bought the entire J.T. Foote property. $100,000 from the estate was bequeathed to the Waltham Hospital, a fitting conclusion to the Foote Saga.

In 1941 my father offered me the property at 277 North Avenue that he had purchased from Grover Cronin in the 1920s. It was the original George Garfield house, built in 1821, with a large red barn, which blew down in the 1937 hurricane. He paid $6,500 for house, barn and 4 1/2 acres, had a $3,300 mortgage on it, which I took over. My husband, Charles V. Cooke and I have raised two children there. He died in 1981, and both my son and my daughter chose to marry and live in Maine. I am the last of J.T. Foote's children and believe that our generation has had the best!

Elsie Cooke

Elsie Cooke, native and lifetime resident of Weston, is the winner of last years' Senior Citizens' Club essay contest. That essay, "Memories... Memories...," was published in our last issue. We asked Elsie Cooke for further reminiscences, and here it is to be shared by all who cherish Weston history. An additional piece will be published in our nest issue.

BACK BAY COMES OF AGE

Lecture with slides by bestselling author William Martin, on Wednesday, November 8, 2000, at 7:30 p.m., in the Community Room of the Weston Public Library. Put it on your calendar now.

THE HEWS COMPANY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE CULTURE OF FLOWERPOTS

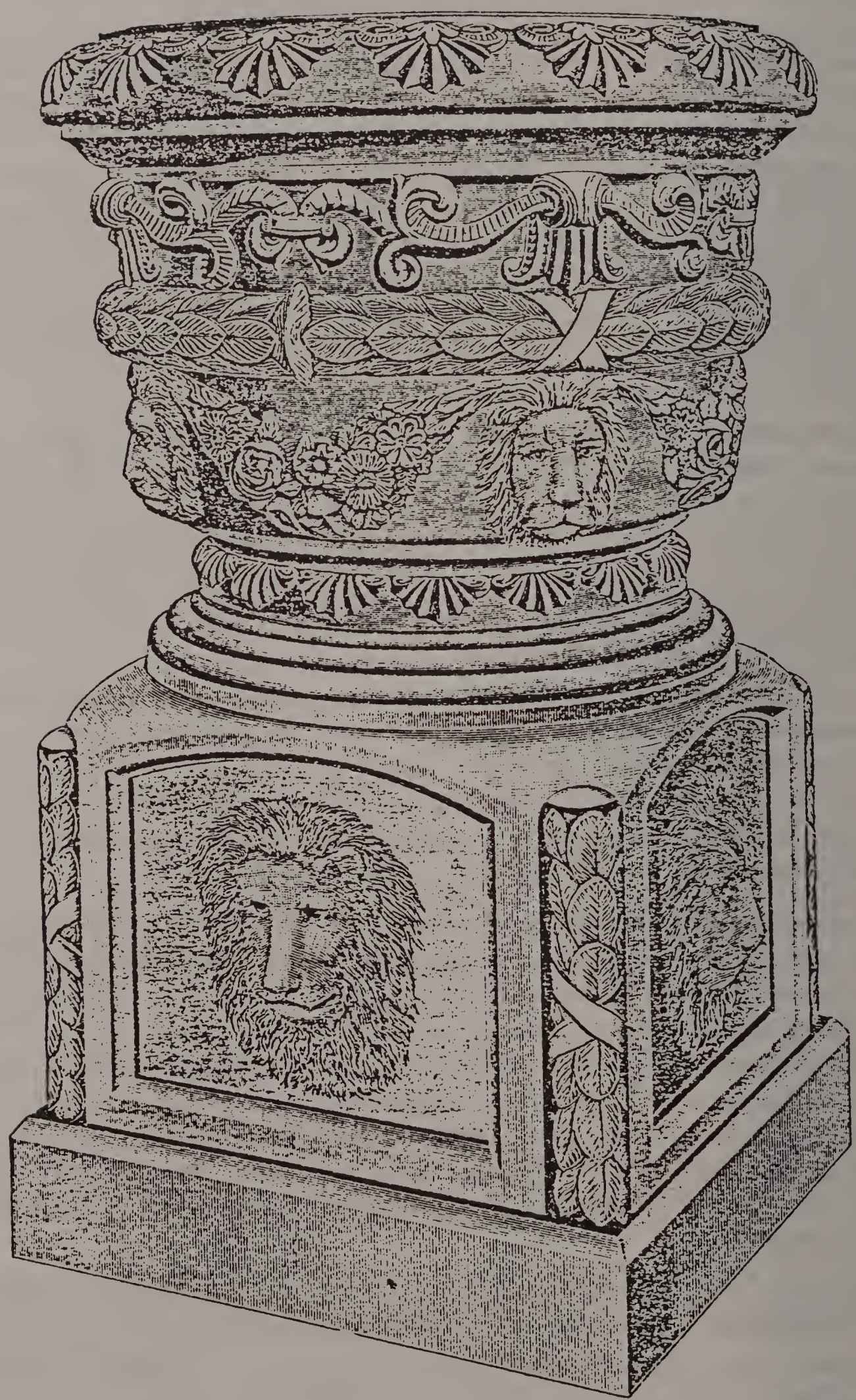
Flowerpots are required whenever flowers and plants are grown in the greenhouse or home. In addition flowerpots are frequently used for the transport of plants from the greenhouse or garden store to an area of display such as indoor and outdoor gardens, courtyards, window boxes, cemeteries, and even horticultural shows. The flowerpot as a cultural artifact is both mundane and ordinary. But as an investigative tool to understand people and their relationship to the natural world, the flowerpot is extraordinary. This article briefly looks at the flowerpot in the nineteenth century. A potted plant in a room was rare at the start of the nineteenth century, but by the end of the century parlors were overrun with greenery. The A. H. Hews Company of Weston and North Cambridge, Massachusetts played a prominent part in this transition.

During the nineteenth century gardening books and journals made very specific recommendations as to the size and shape of the flowerpot, depending on the type of plant that was to be grown. In addition, there were glass jars recommended for the growing of tulips, hyacinths, and crocuses. For anyone who was very particular about plants, to have other than the proper type of container would have been cause for ridicule. When considering flowerpots, although form does follow function, they are much more than mere containers as they function as part of the overall display.

A study of the flowerpot can yield information that encompasses the technical aspects of pottery manufacture including choice and preparation of clays, various techniques in vessel formation, and efforts to increase durability. During the nineteenth century rapid progress was made in the use of machinery, which had a profound impact on the manufacture of durable goods. In the case of flowerpots, it was the 1861 Pottery Molding Machine invented by William Linton of Baltimore, Maryland.

Many horticultural societies were in place by the late 1820s and they were a prime mover to changes in the way plants were grown and handled. The Massachusetts Horticultural Society was founded in 1828 and was soon holding competitions. The 1849 Boston, Massachusetts exhibit included fruits, cut flowers, and about 40 pots of exotic flowers. That same year the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society held their show in Philadelphia and exhibited 20 pots of azalea that included 18 varieties. In addition to these gardening events, fairs and expositions played an important role in introducing many people to cutting edge changes in technology as well as influencing visitors to acquire more goods of all types for their homes and businesses. The 1876 Centennial Exhibition held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was important in this respect.

Plants forced to grow out of season required the use of containers and placement in an artificial environment. As the expertise needed to cultivate plants in this manner became more common, the developing florist and nursery business took advantage by beginning to sell potted plants. In 1825 Grant Thorburn of New York City picked up a small pot of roses from his greenhouse and was carrying it through the streets. With no effort on his part he was able to sell it for fifty cents. But even earlier that this, in 1803 to be exact, Thorburn was selling pots of geraniums from his store. This was not done intentionally, as he was merely placing the plants in his painted flowerpots to indicate how they would look in use.



VASE NO. 370. PEDESTAL NO. 386.

No. 370.	28 inches in diameter, 20 inches high, capacity 3½ bu., each	$20.00
No. 386.	24 inches high, each	20.00

Flowerpots were produced in both redware and stoneware but it was the redware flowerpot which was most in demand because it was relatively inexpensive and was recommended by gardening experts. Redware vessels are produced from the most common of clays, and the name reflects the fact that the clay becomes red during firing. Because redware is porous, air and moisture can go through the flowerpot to promote good root growth for the plants placed in them. Glazes added to redware contained lead which was recognized as a health hazard as early as the 1500s. Stoneware, on the other hand, is formed from clays with fewer impurities thus allowing them to be fired at a higher temperature which also made them more durable. The vessels are much less porous, can take a salt-based glaze, and are frequently used for the storage of acidic liquids such as vinegar and pickles.

Flowerpots were an important pottery form as early as 1820, as evidenced by their inclusion on price lists. In the case of Hervey Brooks (1779-1873) of Goshen, Connecticut, flowerpots were produced as an important component of his economic survival as a potter-farmer. Brooks kept several journals and ledgers, and from entries it is clear that the variety of his occupations and tasks performed was almost limitless: farmer, potter, brickmaker, blacksmith, sawyer, teamster, carpenter, merchant, entrepreneur, landlord, and teacher. He was part of a neighborhood farm labor exchange that helped make the most use of limited resources of man and beast.

The reverse can be said for Abraham H. Hews (1741-1818) of Weston, Massachusetts who was producing flowerpots by 1810. For his son, Abraham Hews II (1766-1854), flowerpots became an important vessel form by 1820. The Hews family became a major manufacturer of redware flowerpots with a yearly production in excess of 700,000 by the late 1860s. To better facilitate the increasing production of flowerpots, the Hews Company moved from Weston, Massachusetts to North Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1871. Their new location was physically situated between large clay deposits and railroad yards which greatly reduced transportation costs associated with obtaining raw materials and shipping finished products. The Hews Company took advantage of the latest improvements in mass production, including assembly line methods to accomplish this feat. In the 1890s, with a work force of 125 men, the company was producing between seven million and ten million flowerpots per year. [Although women are not mentioned specifically as being employed by the Hews Company, there are references to their employment in the decoration and finishing departments at some potteries where color and design were added to vessels - especially dinner plates, serving bowls, pitchers, and the like.] Even into the twentieth century the production of flowerpots at the Hews factory in North Cambridge continued to increase. Ten tons of clay was used per day, and four to five train carloads of finished pottery were sent out each week with deliveries of completed flowerpots going across the country - from Maine to California.

In 1873 the Hews Company had a thirty two page illustrated catalogue offering twelve sizes of machine made flowerpots, eight sizes of hand made flowerpots, and eight flowerpots with handles. In addition were thirteen sizes and styles of hanging flowerpots, five sizes of plant wall brackets, and assorted bulb pans and seed pans.

Changing ideas of beauty and fashion have continually influenced what was desired in containers for the growth and display of flowers and plants. The common, undecorated flowerpot, was used primarily in the greenhouse and garden. However, when the potted plant was placed indoors as a component of interior decoration, more was required. During the nineteenth century, *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* especially, but other magazines

No. 362. 22 in. high, each, $3.00

No. 267. 22 in. high, each, $4.00

as well, often featured "how-to" pages where directions to make flowerpot covers, aquariums, terrariums, and even how to grow plants without soil, were presented.

In the early years of the Hews Company, if the production of flowerpots reached five hundred, it was a very good year. Shortly before the Civil War, its flowerpot stock on hand was about five thousand, and Mr. Hews felt the company would have to shut down over the winter. Horatio Hews turned salesman and elicited orders from regular customers for the spring season and sought out new customers. The complete stock was sold, and there were sufficient additional orders to keep the company at full production for at least a year. The Hews company obtained exclusive rights to the use of the 1861 patented Linton Pottery Molding Machine in Massachusetts. Between 1865 and 1869 the production of flowerpots at the Weston, Massachusetts facility increased from 5000 to more than 700,000 per year. Following the move to larger, more modern facilities in North Cambridge, Massachusetts production increased dramatically - to more than seven million flowerpots a year in addition to other products such as jardinieres, cuspidors, and umbrella stands.

For the Hews Company, the incorporation of pottery molding machines and improved facilities to produce more flowerpots is only part of the story. To be successful, the Hews Company needed to meet the need of their customers and this they did with great skill. Not only did they meet current needs, they anticipated trends in styles. They may have even created demand for their flowerpots.

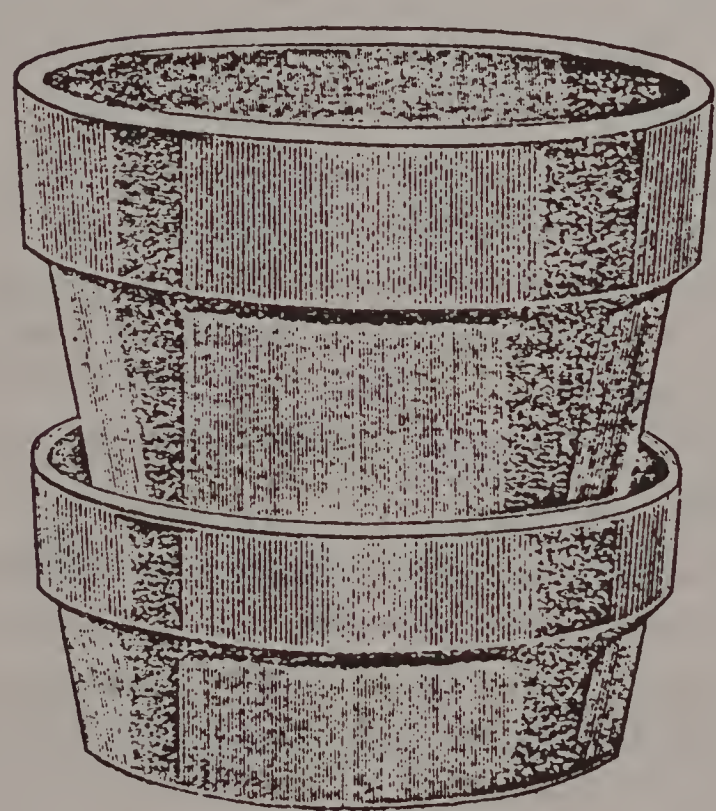
The first Hews catalogue was published in 1870. Between that time and the publication of their 1881 catalogue, they continued to meet, and even exceed, the expectations of their customers. The Hews Company received an award for their display of flowerpots at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the 1881 catalogue includes a full

No. 80.

14 in. . . . . each, $2.00

No. 79.

8 in.	each, $1.00
10 in.	" 1.50
12 in.	" 2.00



CALLA LILY POTS.

	No. 302. Unpainted.	No. 303. Painted.
8 in., each	50c	75c
10 in., each	90c	$1.25

CALLA LILY POTS.

	No. 304. Unpainted.	No. 305. Painted.
8 in., each	30c	50c
10 in., each	60c	75c

page devoted to advertising this fact as well as an open letter to their patrons recounting the history of the firm and how they have continuously met the needs of their customers: "Thirty-five new designs are illustrated for the first time in this edition . . . For several years past a deep saucer for a Calla Lily Pot has been generally demanded ... we have this season given our personal attention to a design that cannot fail to please all."

During 1875 and 1876 there was a demand by the American people for reproductions of ancient pottery. Extensive excavations of the ancient world including in Cyprus and Troy had recently been completed. In anticipation of expected demands for copies of these

ancient vessels, the Hews Company was able to obtain advance photographs of Dr. Heinrich Schliemann's collection and had manufactured and made available for sale reproductions of these urns and vases before the originals had reached the British Museums in London!

Flowerpots produced on the pottery molding machine, while not decorative, were inexpensive and functional. They were sufficient to meet most of the needs of the nursery and gardening business in wholesale operations. In the 1873 Hews catalogue there are several testimonials. On December 9, 1871 the florist firm of Barnard, Hunnewell, & Severance in Providence, Rhode Island wrote: "We desire to express to you our satisfaction with the Machine-made pots, which we have had of you [sic] large numbers the last three years. Their shape, finish, and excellent quality generally, it would seem impossible to excel. The last lot of 20,000 small pots received of you was a particularly good one, and was delivered in good shape. Some of your newer sizes are a great convenience to repotting." Machine made flowerpots were smoother on the inside than other flowerpots which made the tasks of potting and repotting plants by gardeners easier.

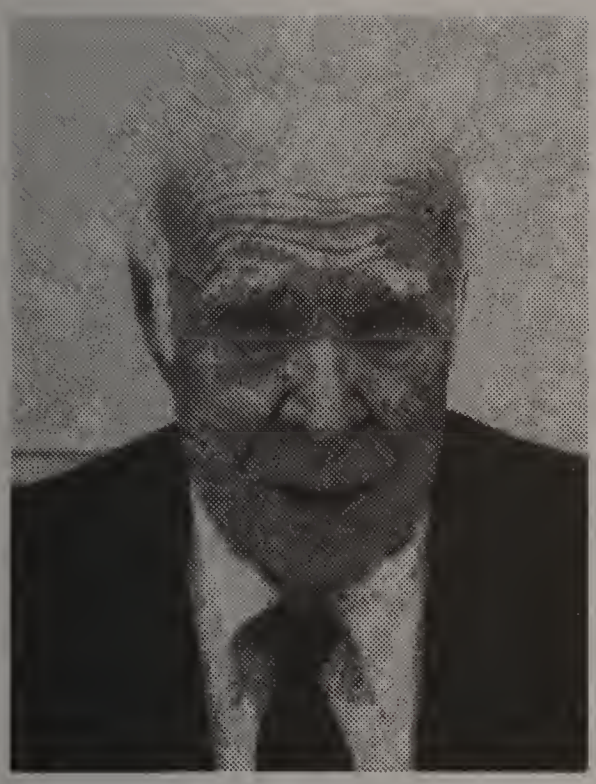
Advertisements by the Hews Company after incorporating the latest in pottery molding machines indicate how much the Hews Company continued to meet the needs of their customers. In 1888, A. H. Hews invented the 'shoulder pot,' a more practically shaped pot for commercial use than the straight sided, rimless pots then in vogue. By 1931 A. H. Hews & Co. offered a new pot that is stronger on the edge, where breakage occurs, had no rim to chip, and **at no increase in price.**

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the Hews Company of Weston began to specialize in the production of flowerpots. As the company grew, and especially after the move to North Cambridge, it was able to produce great quantities of flowerpots at low cost which allowed more of the population to participate in changes in gardening displays both inside and outside of its homes. The Hews Company was one of very few firms which developed a niche market for flowerpots. As such they were an important player in this change.

The Hews Company continued to be a major producer of flowerpots well into the twentieth century. In the 1940s the yearly production of flowerpots in 91 sizes and styles exceeded 18 million, and the Hews Company anticipated that their clay pits contained enough clay for another fifty years. Unfortunately, the introduction of plastic flowerpots in the 1950s reduced the demand for redware flowerpots. The Hews Company, failing in its attempt to compensate for this development, was renamed Lockwood Products in 1959 and began to produce plastic flowerpots. In 1980 this new company became Lockwood Products, Inc. and moved to Leominster, Massachusetts.

Hazel H. Lathrop

Hazel H. Lathrop is a native of Massachusetts and received her Master's degree from the University of Massachusetts in Boston in 2000 in the Historical Archeology Program. This article is based on part of her thesis. Historical archeology is a second career for her, following over thirty years as a clinical hospital scientist. She is currently a museum teacher for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in Newbury, Massachusetts. Copies of her thesis, "The Culture of Flowerpots," are filed at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Weston Historical Society.



J. Kenneth Bennett

IN MEMORIAM:
J. Kenneth Bennett

J. Kenneth Bennett, Ken to his numerous friends, 87, died on Wednesday, March 1st, 2000. He was a founding member and for long years secretary of our Society. A native of Hartford, Connecticut, he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Columbia University. He was a general manager of the R.H. Stearns Company, and taught at Simmons College and Lasell College. A resident of Weston for 59 years, he was active on its Finance Committee, Parents Teachers Association, the Golden Ball Tavern, and the Weston Golf Club.

His last contribution to our Society was his detailed write-up of the Society's history for the WESTON 2000 chronicle, preserved in the Red Book collection of that event. Ken was a charming gentleman, helpful to his colleagues in the Society, beloved by all. He will be seriously missed by us.

ADVANCE NOTICE TO MEMBERS:
BESTSELLING AUTHOR TO SPEAK

You are invited to join the Weston Historical Society president, bestselling author William Martin, in celebration of the twenty-first anniversary of his bestseller book Back Bay. Drawing on slides from his original research, he will take us on a tour of the Back Bay and its history from mudflat to Hancock Tower.

William Martin, a resident of Weston, is also the author of other historical novels, including Cape Cod, Annapolis and the most recent Citizen Washington. He has also written for television and for motion pictures.

The lecture with slides, entitled BACK BAY COMES OF AGE, will take place on Wednesday, November 8, 2000, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Weston Public Library, followed by refreshments.

This is a special occasion to hear an authentic slice of our history presented by an experienced researcher and successful historical novelist. Do not miss it - you will be enlightened and entertained.

BACK BAY COMES OF AGE

Lecture with slides by bestselling author William Martin, on Wednesday, November 8, 2000, at 7:30 p.m., in the Community Room of the Weston Public Library. Put it on your calendar now.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.

All three books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

DUES ARE DUE

Annual dues for the year 2000 are now past due. Please mail your check to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, MA 02493. If you are in arrears for the past year, it would be kind of you to rectify this by enclosing the same amount for that year, too.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Vera Laska

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THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 1999 Volume XXX, No. 1

OVENBIRD, a long distant migrant, with a habitat preference in the interior rather than on the seashore, is a ground loving warbler. It is 5-6 inches long, olive-brown above, with a striped light vest and an orange crown with black borders.

FOREST FRAGMENTATION EFFECTS ON THE BREEDING BIRDS OF WESTON

David C. Morimoto

Deep history repeats itself every spring in the forests of Weston, as thousands of birds move like rivers through town. Having spent much of the year away in Latin America, the West Indies, and the North American southeast, these neotropical and subtropical migrants return to the temperate zone to take advantage of longer days, abundant food, and perhaps reduced pressures from competition and predation. They have been taking this journey for generations, as the forests have followed the retreat of glaciers for ten thousand years.

The phenomenon is spectacular, and a walk through Weston's conservation lands in mid to late May can be a whole body experience. Actively foraging birds in fresh breeding plumage eat newly emerging insects on greening and flowering trees, shrubs, and herbs, on the ground, and in the air. The air fills with a concert of songs and calls, with migrants and residents alike participating, all with a deeply ingrained anticipation of breeding soon.

Surrounded by permanent residents like chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, and creepers, along with recent arrivals like warblers, tanagers, thrushes, and flycatchers, one can easily feel like a participant in, and not merely an observer of, a phenomenon of global extent and deep historical significance.

Many of the birds settle here to breed in the forests ofWeston, often returning to the same woodland year after year, before dying somewhere in their vast range. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to experience the daily lives of these fantastic creatures as they raise their young in town. Just knowing they are here and will return gives much substance to the spring and summer. We would notice their absence, for sure.

Although this awesome spectacle of migration and breeding has unfolded annually for thousands of years, the landscapes through which the birds move and in which they settle have undergone many changes. These changes, particularly the rapid and dramatic transformations brought about by humans, have no doubt affected the lives of birds.

By the turn of the century, most of the forests in Massachusetts had been cleared for agriculture and grazing. These land use practices, together with a land ownership system of fixed property boundaries, led quickly to declines in soil fertility and subsequently to the abandonment of the land for the more productive soils to our west (Cronon, 1983). Eastern forests began to regenerate, and today Massachusetts is nearly seventy percent forested. Weston itself is about forty percent forested, and much of the forest is protected as conservation land, particularly along watercourses which, I suspect, are among the preferred routes of birds migrating through the region.

The effects of this forest regeneration on Weston's birds can be glimpsed by comparing today's situation with historical records. For example, forest birds like the magnificent Pileated Woodpecker, a permanent resident, and the Hermit Thrush, a breeding migrant with a beautiful flute-like song, are both listed as being rare in Charlotte Smith's 1952 annotated checklist of the birds of Weston (Smith, 1952), while today they are encountered quite commonly on walks through the forest. Additional changes in bird distribution and abundance can be expected as the forests mature further into old growth stands, should we allow this succession to continue.

Although regional forest cover is higher than it has been in over a century, eastern forests are being increasingly fragmented by the current land use practices associated with the development of urban, suburban, and rural lands for human living; a development is no stranger to Weston.

How has fragmentation of forest influenced the birds that breed there? We can gain some insights from long tern monitoring studies, which have documented global and regional population declines in several species of forest birds, particularly the long distance migrants coming from Latin America and the West Indies, and especially those migrants that prefer to breed in the interior, as opposed to the edge, of forests (Terborgh, 1989). Many factors, including habitat alteration on the wintering and breeding grounds and along migratory routes, could be conspiring to contribute to these declines. Therefore, ecological research is essential if we want to untangle the mystery of these declines and conserve the populations of migratory birds that enrich our forests and our lives every year. It was in this spirit of concern that I began studies of Weston's breeding birds in 1995 with Michelle Frankel , a Ph.D. candidate in general studies at Boston University.

Together, Michelle and I mounted a tremendous effort to determine how forest fragmentation affects the communities of birds in Weston, and in particular, how it affects the reproductive success of the Ovenbird *(Seiurus aurocapillus)*, a migrant that settles to breed in large numbers in our forests. With the cooperation of many local constituencies and the help of over forty volunteers and paid research assistants, we have begun to get answers to our questions.

Our three years of field work involved early morning censuses of birds, countless vegetation measurements, and intensive observations of Ovenbirds in three large (120-315 hectares) and 17 small (3-60 hectares) forest fragments in Weston (one site was in Wellesley, and one was in Wayland). The field work was personally very rewarding. When one spends the better part of spring and summer in the forest year after year, its riches and subtle complexities become familiar and welcoming. This euphoric sense of place contrasts with the tedium of data analysis, but together the two lead to deeper understanding.

Black and white warbler, long distance migrant, with interior habitat

Black throated blue warbler, long distance migrant, with interior habitat

The results of our analyses of bird censuses revealed significant effects of forest size on the composition of the local bird community. Bird communities in larger fragments had more long distance migrants that prefer to breed in the forest interior, like Ovenbirds, Scarlet Tanagers, Wood Thrushes, and Great-crested Flycatchers. This result is expected as a by-product of area differences alone. When we controlled for area effects, we discovered that some differences between large and small fragments persisted. For instance, we found that the larger forests had more interior species and fewer edge and interior-edge species in

any one census area (100 meter radius circle). Densities of interior species were also higher within census areas in the larger forests. The implication of these findings are that forest fragmentation in Weston does affect the bird community, and that large fragments provide better habitat for interior birds and, therefore, must be protected in order to conserve their population in Weston.

The results of our analyses of Ovenbird reproductive success provided more detailed information on how forest fragmentation can affect population processes within a species. The Ovenbird is a type of warbler that forages and nests on the ground and tends to prefer the forest interior. Its name comes from its nest, which is built entirely by the female and resembles a rounded Dutch oven with a side entrance. Ovenbirds are not always easy to see, as their brownish olive plumage and spotted underside blend in with the vegetation. A close look, however, reveals an orange crown flanked by black borders, and pink legs. Ovenbirds are much more often heard than seen, with males singing their loud *teacher, teacher, teacher, teach* song repeatedly, primarily from the lower branches of large trees.

Ovenbirds did not occur in forest fragments smaller than 9 hectares. In the remaining seven small forest fragments they experienced lower pairing success (74% of 33 males with mates) and lower reproductive success (48% of 33 males with at least one young fledged from the nest) compared to the three large forests (98% of 62 males with mates, 79% of 62 males with at least one young fledged). Furthermore, Ovenbird males occurred in higher densities in large forests, where their territories were smaller than those defended by males in small forests. Males may have been compensating for poorer habitat quality in small forests by expanding the area they had to defend in order to reproduce successfully.

What these findings tell us is that forest fragmentation affects Ovenbirds adversely, probably through decreased food abundance (Burke and Nol, 1998) and increased rates of nest predation and brood parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds, who lay their own eggs in other birds' nests to be raised by unsuspecting hosts. Michelle witnessed nest predation by chipmunks, and we have video footage of Blue Jay nest predation. We discovered both depredated nests and nests with Cowbird eggs, more often but not exclusively, in small fragments. The Ovenbird's social system might also be upset by forest fragmentation. Ovenbirds tend to settle in loose aggregations, probably because of the ample opportunities for "adulterous" copulations made possible by group living (Ovenbirds and other species engage in this behavior routinely). Reduced habitat availability for groups of Ovenbirds in small fragments might discourage their settlement in these forests.

What do these findings mean for Ovenbirds? Can their populations in Weston sustain themselves? When we plugged the numbers for Ovenbird reproduction rates into equations designed to model population processes, we discovered that the reproductive success of Ovenbirds in small fragments is not sufficient to sustain population in these forests. Continued occupancy of these fragments through the years depends on colonization by birds born elsewhere. Ovenbirds in large fragments experience higher reproductive success, but the rates we observed are barely enough to sustain them without colonization by birds born elsewhere.

Despite these sobering findings, the rates of reproductive success by Ovenbirds in Weston are much higher than in more heavily deforested landscapes, such as the agricultural landscapes of Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania (Wander, 1985, Porneluzi et al., 1993, Villard et al., 1993, Wenny et al., 1993, Van Horn et al., 1995). It seems clear that the amount of regional forest cover plays a significant role in buffering against the effects of forest frag-

mentation on Ovenbird populations (Robinson et al., 1995). Because the relationship between reproductive success and forest cover is not linear, there likely exist critical thresholds of fragmentation beyond which populations would not be able to sustain themselves (With and Crist, 1995). We would be wise, therefore, to conserve large forest fragments and minimize fragmentation and habitat loss if we want to conserve populations of Ovenbirds and other species in Weston's forests.

Our studies of Ovenbirds continue today, with a focus on their mating systems, the work required by parents to raise their young, and nest predation. In the future, I hope to complement our studies of communities, populations, and individual behavior with studies of the habitats preferred by birds migrating through the Weston landscape in spring. Together, these studies will help us identify the limits of tolerance by birds to our landscape-transforming activities, and develop strategies of adaptive management and land use planning

Blue Jay, a permanent resident, with habitat in the interior and its edge toward the seashore

that will allow us to continue to share the forests with them. With nearly 120,000 hectares of municipally administered forest in Massachusetts (More, 1984), it is clear that management at the level of the municipality will be of critical importance in the absence of any regional management planning.

The fast pace of our modern lives often leads our minds far away from the forest outside our doors. Thus our individual and collective actions often reveal disregard for the integrity of the forest ecosystems across the landscape. The more we remove and fragment the forest, the more we impact the populations of forest interior migrant birds like Ovenbirds. But the forest is more than a living place for nonhuman creatures; it can provide us humans with a sense of place, continuity, and transcendence. Margaret Morse Nice (1987) grew from her experiences observing an Ovenbird at its nest: "It seemed as if life stood still for me while I devoted myself to this nest, as if I had endless leisure to look, to enjoy, to think, alone in this pleasant place in the woods... A great admiration for this quiet little bird arose in me, for her self-sufficiency, the simplicity of her life unencumbered by the possessions that overwhelm us human beings."

That the forest can teach humans should not be overlooked when making decisions about development in the name of human progress, because the loss of forest will affect us as adversely as it affects the birds living in it. As Harrison (1992: xi) remarked, after having walked through remnants of an ancient forest in Italy, "There and then I perhaps realized that the forest, in its enduring antiquity, was the correlate of the poet's memory, and that once its remnants are gone, the poet would fall into oblivion." Our historical landscape, born of our interactions with nature, does not allow us to consider the poem separately from the poet. As Cronon (1983: 15) noted: "To search for that poem would in fact be a mistake. Our project must be to locate a nature which is within rather than without history, for only by so doing can we find human communities that are inside rather than outside nature."

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* * *

David C. MORIMOTO is a native Bostonian, who recieved his Ph.D. in biology in 1989 from Boston University. He is involved in the Children's Rainforest Workshop in Peru, sponsored by the Children's Environmental Trust Foundation International, a program for middle school students. In preparation is his book on unifying features characteristic of living systems. He has been teaching at Regis College since 1988. Michelle Frankel contributed to this article.

TRACING THE HISTORY OF THE NATHANIEL JENNISON HOUSE II.

Continued from Fall, 1998 issue.

While living in Barre, Nathaniel Jennison (Junior) served twice as moderator, in 1784 as a delegate to a convention in Worcester on Impost Grievance, in 1787 on a committee on Shays' Rebellion, and in 1797 on a committee to Persecute for Monopoly. He died in 1803 deeply in debt.

On March 1, 1772 (in the twelfth year of the King's reign), Nathaniel, son of Nathaniel Jennison, of Rutland District, Worcester County, Province of Massachusetts Bay in New England, sold certain tracts of land containing about 100 acres of which six acres were in Needham and the remainder in Weston for 433 pounds, 6 shillings and 8 pence to Josiah Seaverns. Apparently as time passed and the boundary between Weston and Needham (now Wellesley) was more accurately surveyed, part of the original land grant was determined to be south of the town line. The first tract, being on the north side of the highway in Weston, was conveyed with the dwelling house standing thereon. The second tract was located on the south side of the aforesaid highway and included a barn and "Pot-Ash House." The conveyance was subject to a lease which was granted by Nathaniel's father to Caleb Wilder for the use of the "Pot-Ash House."

Oldest photograph of the Jennison house.

At that time, potash was a very important commodity. Potash is an alkali which was used in the manufacture of soap and glass. As a soap it played an essential role in the cleansing and manufacturing of woolens and linens. The wool industry in particular was of vital interest to England. By the eighteenth century, England no longer had even a fraction of the forest resources to produce the potash needed in the woolen industry. The American colonies with their vast resources of timber offered England a reliable source of potash. Potash became the first great staple of trade between the American colonies and England.

Returning to the sale of the real estate to Josiah Seaverns in 1772, it is interesting to note that the description of the second tract on the south side of the highway includes the mention of a brook flowing through the property. This brook would have been essential for the operation of the "Pot-Ash House;" it continues to flow in that same location.

In Lamson's History of the Town of Weston, Mass., it is recorded that Josiah Seaverns was in the town militia as a sargent in 1775 and as a Second Lieutenant in 1776. In deeds conveying land to him in Weston, he was referred to as a "Yeoman."

One of the earliest maps of Weston, which was surveyed by Kingsbury in 1795 and 1796, shows the house under the name "Lieut. J. Seaverns."

Josiah Seaverns was a member of the Baptist Society. He was one of several petitioners who protested the town requirement that the Baptists pay taxes for the support of Rev. Samuel Kendal, since they were paying for the support of their own Baptist Church. It was finally determined in 1786 that most of the petitioners would be exempt from paying taxes in support of Rev. Kendal.

It is interesting that Josiah Seaverns' mother's maiden name was Sarah Jennison. Sarah was probably the daughter of Peter Jennison of Sudbury. Peter Jennison was a younger brother of Samuel Jennison. This Samuel Jennison was the father of Nathaniel Jennison who built the house which is the subject of this history.

On April 13, 1817 Josiah Seaverns sold the land (114 acres) and buildings (dwelling house, farm and other buildings) to Joseph Winship. Joseph Seaverns must have financed this sale to Winship, because the same property was subsequently sold at auction by the Estate of Josiah Seaverns to the son of Joseph Winship, Joseph Winship, Jr., on May 18, 1824 for $1,500.00, subject to the right in equity of Joseph Winship, Sr., a farmer.

Then on June 5, 1826 the same property was sold by Joseph Winship, Sr. and Joseph Winship, Jr. to Levi Jennings, a farmer, for $1,725.00. It is interesting to note that the name "Jennings" was earlier synonymous with the names "Jenison" and Jennison." Perhaps someday a connection between the two families could be established.

Levi Jennings died on November 18, 1870 and according to his will he left the same 114 acres with the buildings thereon to the children of his son, Levi Jennings, Jr. The land and buildings were valued at $7,500.00. The names of the five children were:

Charlotte Elizabeth Jennings, born 1848, married Willard W. Morse of Waltham

Caroline Jennings, born October 10, 1850, married Charles M. Smith, who was born in Oswego, New York

Willard Herbert Jennings, born January 1, 1854, married Clara Isabel Upham of Weston

Edward Jennings, born May 31, 1856, married Ella Melissa Brown, who was born in Lewiston, Maine

Ellen Mary Jennings, born March 23, 1858, married Howard D. Nash of Wichester, Mass.

On May 20, 1880 Caroline's interest was sold at auction to Ella M. Jennings who was the wife of Caroline's brother, Edward, for $960.00.

On May 18, 1881 Charlotte, Willard and Ellen sold their interests in the property to their brother, Edward for $4,200.00. In the deed for this transaction the sixth parcel on which the homestead stood was described as follows: "bounded beginning at the southeast corner on Glen Street (subsequently the name was changed to Glen Road) and a point in the wall 10 feet northwest from the northwest side of the northwest stone gate post of the driveway leading to the house of Willard H. Jennings and then running northeast in a straight line to the center of a large cherry tree which is 27 feet southeast from the large cow barn, then

northeast to a Chestnut tree in the wall which bounds the Cranberry Meadow Lot, then northeast by a wall and by the Cranberry Meadow Lot and the Raspberry Lot to the Long Orchard, then southwest by the Long Orchard to Glen Street, then southeast by Glen Street to the point of beginning, said 1 1/2 acres enclosed by walls." Elsewhere in this deed there is the following reference: "Glen Street, leading from Rice's Crossing to Weston." The location where Glen Street crossed the railroad tracks at Wellesley Farms was known as Rice's Crossing. This was a grade crossing located a short distance east of the present overpass.

Edward finally obtained all the interests in the property on October 19, 1886 in a deed from his mother Charlotte Maria Jennings. Next on July 29, 1899, the property was conveyed by Edward Jennings to his wife, Ella M. Jennings, by way of a third party, Mabel A. Dodmun. Prior to 1912 conveyances directly between husband and wife were illegal. The deeds transfering title to Ella conveyed a total of 12 parcels. Parcel six was described as the lot on which stands the old homestead of the late Levi Jennings and the large cow barn containing about 1 1/2 acres.

During the period that the property was owned by the Jennings family, its predominent use was that of a dairy farm., known at least in its later years as Glen Farm. (see accompanying photographs.)

Edward's brother Willard operated a summer resort east of the farm at Wellesley Farms, which was known as Glen House (see copy of promotional brochure below).

GLEN HOUSE AND COTTAGES

HIGH LOCATION NEAR STATION. IN WELLESLEY FARMS. THE BEAUTIFUL SECTION OFTEN CALLED THE "LENOX OF THE EAST." OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IS COMPOSED OF A SELECT CLASS WHO COME HERE TO SPEND THEIR SUMMERS.

BUSINESS MEN FIND THE PLACE CONVENIENT TO BOSTON. AS WELL AS A HEALTHY LOCATION.

AUTOMOBILE PARTIES ACCOMMODATED.

TENNIS. BILLIARDS. AUTO SERVICE. GARAGE. ETC.

W. H. JENNINGS

WELLESLEY FARMS. MASSACHUSETTS

TELEPHONE
WELLESLEY. 21730

Edward Jennings must have been a remarkable person, judging by the record of his activities. In sharp contrast to all the previous owners of the farm, he built up a substantial dairy, and after the disastrous fire on December 16, 1903, a chicken and egg business. Most likely as a result of the fire, he had to sell part of his property in 1904. He was a man of action: he found time to deal with real estate and also served as Inspector of Animals in Weston from 1911 until 1939, shortly before his death in 1940. During the time of the Great Depression, his cows became infected with tuberculosis and had to be destroyed.

George amd Nancy Bates in front of the house, 1985.

The house that was originally built by Nathaniel Jennison in 1732 saw several additions; in 1924 it was moved across Glen Road to its present location at 266 Glen Road. It went through several owners (year in parentheses indicate date of purchase):

Paul K. Thomas (1925)
Waltham Savings Bank (1937)
Rachel Hammond (1938)
Frederick S. & Helen B. Mann (1942)
Albert P. & Lucy R. Everts (1953)
Nancy & George Bates (1961)

George Bates lived the first years of his life in Lexington and Concord, and later in Gloucester, Massachusetts, before moving to Weston in 1958, when he married Nancy Brownell Biddle. George's father, George E. Bates, and Nancy's father, Clinton P. Biddle, were both professors at the Harvard Business School. The newlyweds lived in a rented apartment at 27 Wellesley Street until they purchased the home at 266 Glen Road in 1961.

Nancy moved from Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her family in 1937 to 100 Orchard Avenue in Weston, where her mother lived in another antique house until her demise in 1998. Nancy graduated from Concord Academy in 1951 and from Smith College in 1955. The Bateses have maintained their residence at 266 Glen Road through the writing of this history (in 1985) and still live there at the time of this publication. They have no plans to move.

George Bates

This article has been severely abbreviated by the editor from the lively original paper by its author, George Bates. Readers are strongly urged to look into the original typescript, available at the History Room of the Weston Public Library and/or the Weston Historical Society Museum Archives. They will discover some fascinating characters and interesting events connected with the history of the Jennison house.

NEW ENGLAND BLUE LAWS.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY, PLYMOUTH AND NEW HAVEN COLONIES AND CONNECTICUT.

"Upon the Sabbath they'll no physic take,
Lest it should worke, and so the Sabbath breake."
— Ancient Poet.

Following are selections from the old records, showing the most interesting of the genuine blue laws of the early colonial times, concluding with the majority, the curious ones, of the "Peter's Blue Law," which good authorities believe are largely distortions and concoctions. The old Massachusetts Sabbath laws were little stricter than now, with the exception of marked instances that are quoted.

SUNDAY LAWS AND ORDERS OF THE GENERAL COURT OF THE COLONY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Taken from the Records — 1630-1760.

1635. Whereas, complainte hath been made to the Courte that dyvers persons within this jurisdiction doe usually absent themselves from church meetings upon the Lord's day, power is therefore given to any two assistants to heare and sensure, either by fine or imprisonment (at their discretion) all misdemeanors of that kind committed by any inhabitant within this jurisdiction, provided they exceed not the fine of 5 shillings for one offence.

1630. It is ordered that John Baker be whipped for shooting at fowl on the Sabbath day.

1669. Any p'son or p'sons that shall be found smoaking tobacco on the Lord's Day, going too or coming from the meetings, within two miles of the meeting house shall pay 12 pence for every such default to the collonie's use.

1692-93. All and every justices of the peace, constables and tythingmen are required to restrain all persons from swimming in the water, unnecessary and unreasonable walking in the streets or fields in the town of Boston, or other place; keeping open their shops or following their secular vocasions or recreations in the evening preceding the Lord's day, or on any part of the said day or evening following.

An Act in addition to the Act entitled "An Act for the better observation and keeping of the Lord's Day" made and passed by the Great and General Court held at Boston in 1692.

1716. Whereas, in and by the said act it is declared: "That no tradesman, artificer, labourer, or other person whatsoever, shall upon the land or water, do and exercise any labour, business or work of their ordinary calling, nor use any game, sport, play or recreation on the Lord's Day, or any part thereof (works of necessity and charity duly excepted) upon pain that every person so offending shall forfeit 5s"; and further, that no traveller, drover, horse-courser, wagoner, butcher, higler, or any of their servants, shall travel on that day or any part thereof, except as by the said law is excepted, upon the pain of 20s." Notwithstanding which many persons do presume to work and travel on the said day.

Therefore, for the effectual preventing such immoral and irreligious practices, be it resolved: — That whoever shall for the future, contrary to said Act, do or exercise any labour, business or work of their ordinary callings, or use any game, sport, play or recreation on the Lord's Day, or any part thereof, shall forfeit and pay the sum of 10s; and all persons travelling contrary to said act, the sum of 20s for the first offence, and upon a second conviction of either of the aforesaid offences, double the respective sums afore-mentioned, and be also

bound with sureties for their good behavior to the next Sessions of the Peace in such county where said offenders shall be convicted. And that if any person being able of body and not otherwise necessarily prevented, shall for the space of one month together absent themselves from the public worship on said day, the Grand Jurors are hereby directed and required to present such persons to the General Sessions of the Peace, who, unless they can make proof that they have not so absented themselves, but have attended divine worship in some public assembly, shall forfeit and pay the sum of 20s. And in case any of the offenders mentioned in this Act shall be unable or refuse to satisfy their fine, they shall be adjudged to be sent in the Cage or Stocks not exceeding three hours, according to the discretion of the Justices.

A provision made in 1760, when the Lord's Day laws were remodelled:

Be it further enacted that no person shall keep open shop, warehouse or workhouse, or hawk or sell any provisions or wares in the streets or lanes of any town or district, or be present at any concert or musick, dancing, or other public diversion, on the evening next preceding the Lord's Day, on pain of forfeit 10c, for each offence; and no retailer, innholder or person licenced to keep a publick house shall entertain or suffer to remain, to be in their houses or yards or other places appurtenant any person or persons; (travellers, strangers or lodgers excepted), drinking or spending their time on the said evening, on penalty of 10c for each offense.

To be continued.

CHARTER ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Save Wednesday, April 14, 1999, 6 p.m., for the Charter Anniversary Dinner of the Weston Historical Society. Speaker T.B.A.

MERRIAM VILLAGE SONG

(Tune: "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean")

1. We're living in Merriam Village
And all of us like it a lot.
We're living in Merriam Village
It's worth every cent that we've got!

CHORUS
(Tune: "Bring Back, Bring Back,
Bring Back my Bonnie to Me")

Come what may - here we'll stay
Working together is really fun!
One for all - all for one -
We'd hate to be moving away!

2. We love every bush in the Village,
Each flower no matter how small.
We love every bush in the Village,
We ought to - we planted them all!

CHORUS (reprise)

3. Our houses in Merriam Village
Are handsome and have a fine view!
Whenever we look out the windows,
Our neighbors are looking out too!

CHORUS (reprise)

4. Because we are all over sixty,
We don't want our friends to forget
That those of us here in the Village
Have plenty of life in us yet!

CHORUS (reprise)

CLARA HUTCHINS
1981

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Just so you know where your money goes and what you are getting for it, we reprint the Weston data from the April, 1998 Boston Magazine, from a chart prepared about 130 communities, made possible by Century 21:

Weston	1987	1997
tax rate $	10.40	13.37
expenditure per student $	4.762	8.027
SAT scores	1014	1196
Graduating class size	176	100
teacher/ student ratio	1:19	1:19
average teacher salary $	34.200	51.479
median house price $	480,000	470,000

The 1997/98 enrollment in the Weston School System, K to 12, was 1966, with a budget of $16.6 million. According to Dr. John Stayn, assistant superintendent for business services, the school administration is expecting a 4.9% increase in enrollment, hence a higher school budget in the near future.

Most importantly, Newsweek in its March 30, 1998 issue (pp.52-56) presented a list of "The Top 100 High Schools" in the United States. While Weston High School placed 31st in the country, it occupied the number 1 place in New England. Only 6 New England high schools made the list, 4 from Massachusetts and 2 from Connecticut.

* * *

In the November 3, 1998 elections, Weston contributed to the final Republican victory of the Cellucci-Swift team for Massachusetts governor and lieutenant governor with 2590 votes, versus the Democratic team of Harshbarger-Tolman's 1920 votes; Libertarian Party's Cook-Israel received 58 votes in our town.

It is regrettable how few people vote in the United States. Consider this: in 137 countries (of 163) a higher percentage of voters go to the polls than in the U.S. Some samples: Malta – 97%, Costa Rica – 85%, Czech Republic – 84%, U.K. – 72.4%, Canada – 60.1%, Russia – 55%, United States – 44.9%!

* * *

Another statistic to ponder: of the 21 rich nations of the globe, we are the last ones to share our wealth with poor nations. Tiny Denmark and Norway contribute 0.97% and 0.86% of their gross national product to developing countries; the United States 0.08%. To add insult to injury: Massachusetts, 3rd in income rank, is the 50th state in the U.S. to contribute to charities. Arkansas and Mississippi, 48th and 49th in income rank, contribute most.

WESTON is a town of unusual scenic beauty, in the south-easterly section of Middlesex County, 13 miles west of Boston. Lincoln lies upon the north, Waltham and Newton (from the latter of which it is divided by the circuitous line of Charles River) on the east, Needham on the south, and Natick and Wayland on the west.

The land is charmingly diversified by picturesque hill and valley, forest and glen; and, though somewhat rocky, the soil is strong, and well adapted to the growth of fruit and forest trees.

Cherry Brook, Hobb's Brook, and Stony Brook, drain the northern section. A beautiful streamlet flows through the Centre; while two other small affluents of Charles River traverse the southern sections of the town. There are some rough ledges, and a romantic gorge called "The Devil's Den," near Stony Brook, upon the line of Waltham.

The principal settlement is along the street, which runs centrally through the town from east to west; yet many of the hills are crowned with beautiful mansions, owned by gentlemen doing business in the metropolis. The people are temperate, intelligent, and refined.

The highways, bridges, and buildings are kept in excellent order. The population is 1,261; the number of voters, 336; of dwelling-houses, 226; and of farms, 181. The valuation is $1,340,683, and the rate of taxation only $0.90 per $100.

The town is divided into six school-districts; and there is a high school, which is well attended and well taught. There is a good town-house and a well-selected public library. The clergymen are the Revs. Edmund H. Sears, D.D., Unitarian (settled in 1865); A. F. Benson, Baptist (settled in 1870); and H. W. Meredith, Methodist.

The territory of this town, anterior to its incorporation, was the westerly part of Watertown; and from this circumstance it probably received its name. It was incorporated Jan. 1, 1712.

An excerpt from *Gazetteer of Massachusetts*, written by the Rev. Elias Nason, M.A., in **1873**

Correct date is Jan.1, 1713, not 1712. Ed.

Harold A. Downing, Treasurer

INTRODUCING: HAROLD A. DOWNING

Born in Corning, New York, Harold, "Hal" Downing earned a B.S. in accounting from the University of Illinois and a C.P.A. diploma in New York. He served in World War II in the Navy in the Supply Corps. He followed up a 25 cent vet-ad in the Herald and became a controller of Industrial Steels in Cambridge, Massachusetts; after 25 years, he retired as Executive Vice President. He than maintained his own CPA practice, which he sold a few years ago.

He and his wife Ruth moved to Weston in 1957. He is one of the earliest members of the Society, and its treasurer since 1989. He was also scoutmaster of Troop 151 for ten years. Ruth has been active in the Women's Community League of Weston, having served as President and as co-chair of the Clothing Exchange, which provides scholarships to our high school graduates to attend college.

Their three children are graduates of Weston High School. Barbara has an MA and is an art teacher at Ten Acre School in Wellesley. Ken has a Ph.D. and is a senior scientist at the University of California at Berkeley. Doug also has a Ph.D. and served with the Peace Corps in India, and is Vice President of MBNA Corporation.

Hal has many hobbies, music, genealogy, woodworking, gardening, travel, golf and skiing, the latter taking him to the Alps almost annually since 1972.

HUMOR THE BEST MEDICINE

When God passed out brains,
I thought he said trains,
And I missed mine.
When God passed out looks,
I thought he said books
And didn't want any.
When God passed out ears,
I thought he said beers
And asked for two long ones.
When God passed out legs,
I thought he said kegs
And asked for two fat ones.
When God passed out noses,
I thought he said roses
And asked for a big red one.
When God passed out heads,
I thought he said beds
And asked for a big soft one.
When God passed out hips,
I thought he said lips
And asked for two large round ones.
God am I a mess.

Anonymous
in Ann Landers' column,
6/13/97, p. C9, Globe

WESTON 2000: REMINDER: Organizations that failed to submit their reports, photos and possible contributions, may do so immediately to Post Office Box 343 in Weston.

TIME CAPSULE: Please let us have your ideas!

QUESTIONS: Call 237-1447, Laska.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.

All three books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 1999 Volume XXX, No. 2

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Robinson Maynard
1929 - 1999

Member of the Board of Directors of the Society
WE SHALL MISS YOU!

(see "Remembering" on page 15)

Entrance to the Spellman Museum.

THE SPELLMAN MUSEUM OF STAMPS & POSTAL HISTORY FACING THE 21ST CENTURY

If Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the United States' most famous stamp collector, then Francis Cardinal Spellman was philately's most famous promoter. The Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History on the campus of Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts, reflects both the Cardinal's personal interest and his understanding of the educational opportunities provided by a stamp museum. For over 35 years the Spellman Museum has served as an international center of philately, housing a collection of over 2,000,000 stamps and a premier philatelic library. As it faces the 21st century, the Spellman Museum is now redefining its purpose and activities to meet the expectations of a new generation growing up with instantaneous electronic communication and with little interest in stamp collecting. To meet this challenge and to guide the planning process, the museum is first examining its own history.

The story of the Spellman Museum begins with Cardinal Spellman's introduction to stamp collecting, when he was studying for the priesthood. Born in Whitman, Massachusetts, in 1889, Cardinal Spellman attended Whitman High School and Fordham University in New York City. Between 1911 and 1916 he attended the North American College in Rome with his good friend from Boston, Laurence B. Killian. Monsignor Killian was an avid stamp collector whose enthusiasm for the hobby was contagious. From 1932 to 1939

Cardinal Spellman was the parish priest at Sacred Heart Church in Newton Center. Monsignor Killian was also serving in the Boston Archdiocese, and the two continued to pursue their shared collecting interest. In 1938 Cardinal Spellman traveled for two months in South America, bringing back the stamps of 12 countries. When he returned, he asked Sister Fidelma Conway, a teacher in the parish school and a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston, to mount the stamps and to help him manage his expanding collection. The next year Cardinal Spellman became Archbishop of New York and left the collection in the care of Sister Fidelma, sending her the philatelic gifts he received as word of his interest spread. In 1948 Cardinal Spellman gave his collection to the Sisters of St. Joseph in honor of his aunt, Sister Philomena Conway, who at the time had been a member of the congregation for 54 years. In 1955 Sister Fidelma opened The Cardinal Spellman Room in the new Regis College Library and formed the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Society. The society had a lively schedule of activities, sponsoring lectures, holding monthly meetings, and publishing a newsletter.

In 1960 the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Collection joined with the privately owned National Philatelic Museum, Inc., in Philadelphia to form the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum, an independent, not-for-profit, educational organization. Cardinal Spellman was the organization's president; Bishop John Maguire of New York, Monsignor Killian, and Bernard Davis of Philadelphia served as vice presidents, and Sister Fidelma Conway was the secretary, treasurer, and executive director.

On March 14, 1961, Cardinal Spellman and Sister Fidelma broke ground for the museum building on an acre of land at the southeast corner of the Regis College campus. On July 27, 1962, Richard Cardinal Cushing, assisted by Cardinal Spellman, placed the cornerstone; and on May 4, 1963, the museum building was dedicated.

About 1,500 people attended the dedication ceremony that coincided with Cardinal Spellman's 74th birthday and the 250th anniversary of the Town of Weston. The Honorable J. Edward Day, Postmaster General of the United States, gave the main address. In his remarks Cardinal Spellman announced that the building was completely paid for by a contribution from the estate of Mrs. Mable Gilman Corey of New York and by the gift of land from Regis College. Among the guests were the Honorable D. Thomas Clements, Chief of the United States Postal Administration; James A. Farley, former Postmaster General of the United States; Dr. Hans Steinmetz, State Secretary of the Posts and Telecommunications of the Federal Republic of Germany; and Edward Dickson, Chairman of the Weston Board of Selectmen.

The Spellman Museum was part of the dramatic increase in the number of museums that occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. Fueling the growth was the availability of public funds from state and federal agencies and the interest in state and local history, fostered by preservation programs and the celebration of the American Bicentennial. New audiences and tax dollars changed how museums were doing business. Collections became more inclusive. Public programs engaged intergenerational learning. Curriculum resources were developed for classrooms. Economic development efforts were tied to cultural resources. To promote professional standards for collection care and to make museums accountable to diverse constituents, the American Association of Museums created the Accreditation Program. The Spellman Museum was one of the first to be accredited in 1971, receiving continuing accreditation in 1981.

1¢ U.S. Stamp, with picture inverted in error, 1901. Misprints raise the value of the stamp considerably.

In the museum's collection are treasures given to Cardinal Spellman as well as significant collections that have been donated through the years, including the only known editions of several hundred stamps. On his travels Cardinal Spellman received stamps from the heads of state of New Zealand, Japan, Ireland, Brazil, as well as other countries. In 1952 Pope Pius XII personally inscribed a miniature sheet of the Roman States centennial issue of the Vatican and gave it to Cardinal Spellman. President Dwight D. Eisenhower and General Matthew Ridgeway gave their collections to the museum; and items from the collections of Theodore Steinway, founder of the piano company, and Jascha Heifetz, the renowned Russian violinist, exhibit the many ways in which people collect stamps. The Spellman Museum also has objects related to stamps and postal history, including 145 stamp cases produced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries reflecting Victorian fascination with the post.

In the 1990s Spellman Museum trustees have been readying the organization for the 21st century. Significant building renovations have been completed. Long-term collaborative agreements have been put in place with Regis College. The governing structure has been revised in keeping with contemporary museum practice. An experienced museum professional is guiding the organization. Central to these efforts is the new mission statement that refocuses the museum's energy upon the opportunities to learn about the world's people through stamps and postal history. To describe more clearly the museum's focus, the trustees changed the name of the organization to the Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History.

Exhibitions and public programs reflect the museum's commitment to engage a diverse audience. On a rotating basis United States material as well as items from around the world are displayed. Examples from named collections provide visitors with the opportunity to see how others have manifested their collecting interests. The museum's programs encourage children and adults to learn together, participating in self-guided activities and opportunities to build individual stamp collections. While working to expand its audience, the mu-

seum continues to serve for the region's large and sophisticated philatelic community through exhibitions of philatelic rarities, a Stamp Store, and one of the country's most significant philatelic libraries.

The Spellman Museum's priorities are: (1) to refine the stamp and library collections to support the museum's education mission; (2) to develop exhibitions and public programs

Youngsters' class at the Museum.

that present the history of global communication as well as the hobby of stamp collecting; and (3) to build a constituency that ensures the vitality of the museum into the 21st century. Underlying these priorities is the Spellman Museum's work to develop strong collaborative partnerships with area schools, civic associations, and other museums and cultural organizations, while continuing to welcome national and international visitors.

The goal is to transform the Spellman Museum into a place where children learn how ideas were transmitted before e-mail, where families learn about history and art and geography together, and where those who have known the passion of collecting come together to tell their stories. In these efforts Cardinal Spellman's words provide guidance:

> Stamps are miniature documents of human history. They are the means by which a country gives sensible expression to its hopes and needs, its beliefs and ideals. They mirror the past and presage the future. They delineate cultural attainments, industrial works, domestic, civil and social life. In a word, these vignettes give a vivid picture of the world, its occupants and their multifarious endeavors.

Viki Sand

The Spellman chronology was prepared by Sister Fidelma Conway, Spellman Museum Founding Executive Director, and George S. Norton, Spellman Museum Trustee.

Viki Sand began her tenure as Executive Director of the Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History in February 1998. Originally from the Midwest, she has spent the last 15 years in New York State, where for 12 years she guided the Shaker Museum and Library in Old Chatham to accreditation by the American Association of Museums. Sand has been elected to national councils of the American Association of Museums and the American Association for State and Local History. She is the Chair of the AAM's Standing Professional Committee on Education. Her undergraduate degrees are in history and education. She has done graduate work in American intellectual history at the University of Minnesota.

The Spellman Museum is open Thursday to Sunday from noon to 5 p.m.; admission is $5 for adults, $3 for students and seniors, free for members and those aged 16 years and under. Time, money and energy well spent! Ed.

1$ Perry Block of Six, 1894-95.

FROM HERE TO THERE

A NEW TREASURE FOR THE WESTON MUSEUM

If you visit the premises of the Weston Historical Society Museum, you will get a new treat in the shape of a captivating painting, depicting a winter scene of Weston by the town's own painter Henry Davenport, executed in or about the year 1943.

The large oil painting on masonite, measuring three by five feet, handsomely framed, shows the Burgoyne Elm, the Fiske Law Office, and the Boston Post Road with its trees, looking toward Wayland, all under its winter attire.

It is a recent gift to the Museum by Mrs. Jane Nichols Fogg and her husband, George P. Fogg, now of Chestnut Hill. Mrs. Fogg grew up on Sunset Road in Weston; her parents were Arthur and Mary Nichols. Mr. and Mrs. Fogg not only honored us by the donation of this exquisite piece of art, but also generously covered the restoration and cleaning of the painting by a professional restorer.

Henry Davenport's "Winter."

Thus Davenport's "Winter" now decorates the space over the fireplace in the Jones sisters' room of the Museum, spreading its winter sunshine over the model 19th century chamber. It is one of the main attractions of the Museum, to be seen by all who cherish good painting and Weston history.

The story behind the painting is a fascinating chapter in several aspects of history, including that of Weston, related to us by Mrs. Fogg. The painting is one of a series of twelve, painted by Henry Davenport to decorate the walls of the recreation hall, or Canteen, for the W.H. Nichols Company of Waltham. This company manufactured machine tools and pumps. Hart and Arthur Nichols and their father hired their fellow townsman, Henry Davenport, the professional artist, to manage the company's public relations, edit their house organ the "Nichols Standard," and illustrate their handbook on the machines.

During World War II, the government offered the company war posters. This gave Davenport a better idea. First, he borrowed art reproductions from museums, then supplied his own works to brighten up the factory. When the new recreation building or Canteen was erected, Davenport produced a dozen large paintings, all landscapes, for its walls. He painted them in the factory, and as the workmen watched him paint, he observed that "machinists understand and respect things done with one's hands." Mrs. Fogg remembers the tall, blue eyed artist with the white moustache, who during her Saturday visits as a child set up for her still lives to paint in water colors.

But as years went by, the Canteen was pulled down, and the company was sold. The paintings were stored but all but three simply disappeared. The one entitled "Winter" was rescued by Jane Fogg's father Arthur Nichols, who cherished its mood and the long-ago winter scene of his town.

After her parents died, Mrs. Fogg decided to find a long term permanent home for the painting, and luckily for the Weston Historical Society, she selected its Museum as the future abode of the "Winter." Thus this truly resplendent piece of art by Westonite Henry Davenport, who was trained at the Beaux Arts in Paris, can be enjoyed by all his fellow townsmen.

The Weston Historical Society Museum at 358 Boston Post Road is open Wednesdays between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. or by appointment at other times (237-1447); there is no admission charge.

Vera Laska
Museum Curator

THE ONE SQUARE MILE PROJECT

> The discoveries which we make abroad are special and particular; those which we make at home are general and significant. The further off, the nearer the surface. The nearer home, the deeper.
>
> H.D. Thoreau. JOURNAL, Sept. 7, 1851

For the past two years, I have incorporated a One Square Mile project into the curriculum of the American Literature elective I teach at Weston High School. Briefly, the project asks students, primarily 11th graders, to select some aspect of a mutually-agreed upon one square mile plot of Weston and to create something of meaning and personal significance which they can share with their classmates regarding this territory.

The basic ideas behind this project are several: the first is to provide students to come to know and appreciate the town in which they reside; a second is to provide students opportunities to express themselves in more creative and/or idiosyncratic ways than usual; a third is to allow students to recognize and value talents and ideas of others; a fourth is to permit collaborative work if such is desired; and a fifth is to offer a break from the usual routine of the English classroom.

Before going into the actual details of how the One Square Mile project works, let me explain how it came about in the first place. There are actually two stories to tell. The first takes us back to the 1970s, that time when social activism from the 1960s had finally made its way down to high schools, and suddenly what went on in the high school seemed terribly

trivial and unimportant. No more school spirit, no more rah-rah attitude; instead, wellmeaning and serious high schoolers looked to save the world, or at least portions of it. Not surprisingly, attendance at school events plummeted, attention was directed toward the larger world; somehow high school became simply a phase to grow out of as fast as possible.

I saw this shift in focus mainly in my predominantly senior World Literature class: not only was there interest in events far beyond Weston High, but thoughts became increasingly focused on life after high school. To me, these students seemed to have forsaken their youth in favor of a pseudo-sophistication that considered all issues in simplistic, albeit idealistic, terms. To bring back a sense of perspective, I came up with the idea of the One Square Mile project in the hopes of having students know one area of their own world intimately and meaningfully.

In truth, the One Square Mile project did not fit in with the World Literature course. The students responded to the assignment and produced a variety of creations; I remember most vividly the sculpture made from materials scavenged from the town dump erected outside my classroom window; at the time I did not appreciate fully an effort which would have compared favorably to some of the objects assembled recently in front of the new town library! Yet there was a sense on the part of all of us that the project was more artificial and contrived than integral and relevant. In time, the course metamorphosed into something different; I was assigned to other courses, and the One Square Mile project disappeared, unlamented.

Now fast forward to the summer of 1997 for the second story. I was taking a course sponsored by the Thoreau Institute in Concord on "Thoreau's World and Ours," a major thrust of which was that by understanding and really knowing our home communities – much as Thoreau had explored and knew Concord – a deep commitment to responsible land stewardship would result. Each of us taking the course – twenty-two middle and secondary school teachers – was required to develop a paper "describing plans to integrate the seminar course material into their classroom teaching." My task, then, was to come up with some scheme for making Thoreau and his emphasis that "Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads" pertinent to the classes I teach. In the process of trying to formulate such an approach, happily I was suddenly struck with the obvious: the One Square Mile project abandoned so many years ago exactly achieved the desired goal! Even better, because now I realized that by hooking the One Square Mile project to Thoreau, it had found its natural and sensible placement in the American Literature course I teach.

And so it has come to pass. Before I share with you some of what the students have produced, let me set forth how the project is presented. Since Thoreau is at the beginning of our study of American literature, I establish the following time-schedule: introduce the idea of the project sometime in September, and have a bus tour of the town exploring one square mile sites (it's best if someone knowledgeable about the town narrates). A vote on which square mile is to be used is then taken; a town map and a one square mile grid is employed; students can lobby the entire class for different plots before the vote is taken, and students decide at this time if they will work singly or in pairs. By October 25, each person or pair will share with the class a sense of what their project will consist of. The week after Thanksgiving recess is devoted to final class presentations.

This timing, while not perfect for all students, puts the project at a portion of the school year when students can comfortable work outdoors; and it fits with Thoreau's place in the

chronology of American literature. I have tried to schedule enough time, considering how heavily involved in activities the students are, but not so much that the momentum for the project will be lost.

The possibilities that students have for rendering the One Square Mile are limited only by their imagination, on the one hand, and, on the other, by the fact that I have to have something tangible to which I can assign a grade. (I hold with Robert Frost that work is truly done "Only where love and need are one"). My covering sheet of explanation for the project to the students reads in part: "I want you to wedge your feet in it (the One Square Mile), as it were, and find what you come to as real. Express what you discover in <u>any</u> form that is appropriate to your findings. A literary composition describing the beauty of the area can be written, or a poem composed in the same vein. A statistical study can be dome, be it of traffic patterns, housing/building types, land usage, flora or fauna. A photographic essay is acceptable, as is an oil painting, or a collage. A scale-model representation can be constructed; perhaps even a sculpture from materials indigenous to the One Square Mile can be put together, or a soil analysis with an explanation of its significance can be done. A topographical map, or historical maps can be executed. I am open to any and all possibilities; my aim is to encourage creativity, enthusiasm and originality within the larger purposes of having you learn something meaningful about the town in which you live and also about yourself. Remember, the emphasis of the assignment is to convey a sense of place and the vital connection between that place and you. You will share your project with the rest of the class in order to gain an appreciation for different approaches and for the unique ways there are of experiencing the One Square Mile."

So much for the explanation of the One Square Mile project. Of greater interest, perhaps, is what sorts of things have been submitted over the past two years. Let me begin with a caveat: while it would be nice to say that all of these projects were superbly done and received A grades, such would not be the reality. Some students, true, did take to the project and did superb jobs, complete in every way and clearly evincing a total commitment to the task. Others, however, gave evidence that they were pressed for time or that they only incompletely realized the potential of their ideas. What can be said is that all projects demonstrated at least some effort, and all tried to be responsive to the demands of the assignment.

What follows is a sampling of the sorts of projects done for the One Square Mile project:
A scale-model replication of a large portion of the Weston Cemetery
A video tour of the oldest house in Weston
A photo collage of a Weston estate
A survey of residents as to their reasons for moving to/living in Weston
An oil painting of the Town Hall
A collage and remembrance of a family-owned business in the town center
A photo essay on patterns of life and continuity in the One Square Mile
A multi-media look at patterns of weekend behavior in the One Square Mile
A consideration of the works of a Weston poet
A catalogue of trees in the One Square Mile
Interpretive pencil drawings of natural aspects of the One Square Mile
A scale model of a railroad bridge in the One Square Mile
A fictional biography of an early settler.

And what of the future? Student feedback suggests that the project's goals are being met, but questions arise. For instance, should I allow students to choose their own square miles? And how are Metco students to be served? Should other academic disciplines be made a part of the process? Should students help in the evaluative process, and if so, to what degree? But raising such questions is part of the fun and challenge of teaching, and I sense that for now the One Square Mile project is on the right track both in terms of Thoreau and of the individual students.

> When it was proposed to me to go abroad, rub off some rust and better my condition in a worldly sense, I fear lest my life will lose some of its homeliness. If these fields and streams and woods, the phenomena of nature here, and the simple occupations of the inhabitants should cease to interest and inspire me, no culture or wealth would atone for the loss.
>
> H.D. Thoreau. JOURNAL, March 11, 1856

Robert V. Walker

A native of St. Louis, Robert V. Walker is a graduate of Princeton, received his Master's Degree in Teaching from Wesleyan University, and has been teaching English at the Weston High School since 1959. He has three children and six grandsons and he lives in Wellesley. As you can see from the above, he is a most imaginative teacher. Alas, he is also a very honest teacher who returned all fruits of this project to his students. However, we hope to publish some of the results of this academic year's ONE SQUARE MILE project in our next issue. Ed.

NEW HISTORICAL NOVEL BY OUR MEMBER

Just in case you did not hear about it before, take note that our fellow member and Society Director WILLIAM MARTIN, the best selling author, has a new book out: CITIZEN WASHINGTON, published by Warner Books. The best description of it comes from the pen of fellow historian Doris Kearns Goodwin: "A sweeping historical novel that brings our first president and his contemporaries to such vivid life that they seem to have walked our streets only yesterday. This is a wonderfully entertaining and thoroughly terrific book." We could not agree more. Martin is also the author of the critically well received novels *Back Bay*, *Cape Cod* and *Annapolis*.

CALL FOR WESTON AUTHORS

Part of the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN will also be an exhibit of Weston authors' work, that is if the authors will identify themselves. Poets, novelists and nonfiction authors kindly drop a postcard with your full name, address, telephone number and book titles with full imprint to Vera Laska, 50 Woodchester Drive, Weston, MA 02493, or fax 781-237-1471. Please do so NOW.

LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

On the next page you see the draft of the announcement of the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN project. This is a program of your Society. We need your moral support. We operate on a shoestring, and it is unlikely that we could afford a townwide mailing of this announcement.

For that reason, we ask you to talk about this program with your friends, especially in any group(s) that you belong to. Please ask your minister, club president, chairperson of your group to announce it at your meetings to the membership, or even better, to print it in any newsletter, bulletin or printed material mailed to the membership.

Publicity for WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN is essential, and YOU CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE! Feel free to xerox the flyer on the next page, or we can supply them.

Your WESTON 2000 Committee has been working hard for two years on this program. Millennia come around only once in a thousand years, and we are lucky that this one happens in our life-time. Let us all pitch in to support its commemoration through WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN, our town, with all the enthusiasm that the occasion warrants!

Please accept the gratitude of your WESTON 2000 Committee,

Sincerely,

Dr. Vera Laska, Chair
WESTON 2000 Committee
Tel. 781-237-1447

Committee members:
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Consultants:
- George Amadon
- Douglas Henderson
- Andrew laska

Exhibit Consultant:
- Laurel Nilsen, Director
- Wellesley Historical Society

MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2000, 7 P.M.

FOR THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN IN THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY!

WESTON TIME CAPSULE

We still have some space in the Weston Time Capsule. Let us have your suggestions on what should be included in it for posterity. It should be opened by Westonites in a hundred years. Share your ideas by sending a postcard to the Weston Historical Society, P.O. Box 343.

WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

With the cooperation of the
Weston Arts & Crafts Association
proudly presents

A MILLENNIAL EXHIBIT

WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN

documenting the recent past and the present of Weston, Massachusetts in words and images. Two years in the making, it represents the cooperation of dozens of town organizations from the cultural, artistic, educational, religious and commercial walks of life. Schools, clubs, churches, women's and conservation groups, museums and businesses are represented, framed by illustrative samples of Weston's art communituy. This is a Weston mosaic of words, photographs and art, a once in a millennium event, displaying the POTRAIT OF WESTON – a chance not to be missed.

WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Gallery and Community Room

Thursday, MARCH 2, 2000 to Friday, MARCH 31, 2000
Open to the public during library hours free of charge.

GALA OPENING

and reception with refreshments
Wednesday, March 1, 2000, 7 p.m.

WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000 WESTON 2000

FIRST LADIES VISITING WESTON

The Weston Historical Society invited a distinguished guest speaker to bring the presence of several First Ladies of the land to Weston. The event took place on Wednesday, April 14, 1999 at 6 p.m in the Upper Student Union Lounge of Regis College, at the annual charter dinner of the Society.

The speaker was Weston resident Ruth Sheehan, known for her humor and dynamic eloquence. She is also the wife of our president, Joe Sheehan. She received her B.A. and M.A. in communication from Emerson College in Boston, and is presently teaching at Northeastern University. She also lectured at Babson, Emerson, Framingham State and Regis Colleges; she served as consultant in communication at numerous industries and corporations, among them Boston Edison, Federal Express and Polaroid.

Her lecture was entitled "First Ladies, Their Little Known Stories and Achievements." She revealed many little known facts about several First Ladies. Hillary Clinton is by far not the first among them to complain about the press; Martha Washington objected in 1789 to the "public notice about me." Early presidents' wives were not referred to as First Ladies; thus Martha Washington was called Lady Washington or Presidentress! Rachel Jackson was haunted by the press for allegedly being a bigamist, having been married previously.

Sarah Polk enjoyed the power that went with the presidency. Buchanan was the only bachelor president, and his niece Harriet Lane played the role of hostess during his tenure of office; she later married a Baltimore banker. Mrs. Grant was very sociable, even encouraged her husband to run for a third term!

The first First Lady to write her memoirs was Julia Grant; the first one to earn a college degree was Lucy Hayes, a great supporter of the temperance movement, fiercely fighting men like Mark Twain who was known for statements like "I will totally abstain from total abstinence!"

Lou Hoover was the first female graduate, a geology major, at Stanford University, also president of the Girl Scouts; she allegedly died of a broken heart because people maligned her husband so much for the depression and for the so called Hoovervilles. We heard about the controversial Florence Harding, the "Duchess;" about Eleanor Roosevelt, the eyes and ears of her husband, and her shock when she found out that his former flame Lucy Rutherfurd was present when he died at Warm Springs. Jackie Kennedy, Lady Bird Johnson and Barbara Bush all made their appearance on videos contributing to the entertainment and enlightenment of the audience.

Vera Laska

JUST FOR THE RECORD

The best state in the USA for children, according to the Children's Rights Council, is Maine, followed by Massachusetts and Connecticut. Do you agree?

In last November's election (1998) of Weston's 7,558 eligible voters 4,627 or 61.2% voted. That is considered a good showing. Sad.

REMEMBERING

Mary Robinson Maynard (1929-1999)

It is with deep sorrow that we are recording the passing of one of the most dedicated members of the Weston Historical Society, Mary Maynard. She served for many years on the Board of Directors of the Society and also on the editorial board of this *Bulletin*. She left us after a long illness this past August 16. A memorial service was held at the First Parish Church in Weston on August 28, 1999.

She was a native of Hartford, Connecticut but became a most faithful resident of our town, Weston, and carried out extensive research on its history, especially in her function of historian of the First Parish. She attended Lesley College and graduated from Antioch College in Yellow Spring, Ohio.

For many years she worked on the Harvard Business Review and later coordinated Harvard University commencement exercises. Since the mid 1980s she devoted herself full time to writing. She contributed several features to the *Boston Globe* and authored several books, all dealing with the countless memorable places of New England. Few people knew the nooks and crannies of this territory as well as Mary Maynard. Her books, published by the Yankee Press of Dublin, New Hampshire, are: *Island Hopping in New England* (1986), *Open Houses in New England* (1991), *Dead and Buried in New England, Respectful Visits to the Tombstones and Monuments of 306 Noteworthy Yankees* (1993), *Houses with Stories* (1994) and *Hassle Free Boston* (1984), published by Lewis Publishers of Lexington, Massachusetts.

Mary was also interested in travel abroad and was instrumental in organizing tours to Europe for the Friends of the Weston Public Library.

Mary Maynard will be fondly remembered as a sincere friend and a capable devotee of local history. Her voice remains with us in her many articles and books, and in the hearts of her fellow Westonites.

We express our deepest condolences to her husband Jim, her three daughters and two sisters. We mourn with you.

Mary, we shall miss you for a long-long time.

Vera Laska

TIME CAPSULE: Please let us have your ideas!

QUESTIONS: Call 237-1447, Laska.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.

All three books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 1997 Volume XXVIII, No. 1

The 1888 First Parish Church.

THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH IN WESTON

The Four Churches, 1698 - 1997

During the nearly 300 years which spanned the period from the founding of the parish in Weston in 1698, to today, 1997, four church buildings have stood almost on the same spot on the same "green knoll" in Weston center.

It was here on Sunday mornings in the middle of the seventeenth century where the farmers and their families, the "Inhabitants of the West End of the Town of Watertown," gathered to begin their long and often difficult journey on foot or by horse-drawn cart, in all kinds of weather, to their church approximately ten miles away. It was also on this

spot where they met the group from Lincoln who joined them, coming over "a rough path," now in part Conant Road. Together, they made the long trek to the most easterly side of Watertown on the Cambridge line. Not only was it a long trip, but once there, they had to remain for both a morning and an afternoon service, each lasting two to three hours. Their return trip home was often made in the dark over poor roads.

In 1694 the farmers from the West End of Watertown petitioned the General Court to be set off into a separate precinct and to build their own meetinghouse. They cited the great distance to the Watertown church and protested against being obligated to journey far from home. It took more than three years before their petition was granted, in 1698.

In the meantime the inhabitants of what is now Weston, then referred to as the "Farmer's Precinct," began, in 1696, to build their first meetinghouse on the old gathering spot. The land was given by Nathaniel Coolidge and formally deeded to the First Parish in 1715 by his son, Jonathan, for the sole purpose of building a meetinghouse.

The terms "meetinghouse" and "church" are often employed loosely. Technically, the first is a structure used for both secular and religious purposes, whereas the second is primarily a house of worship. Some old New England church buildings are still sometimes called meetinghouses, and going to church is "going to meeting."

1. The 1698 Church

Architect's sketch of the 1698 Church, based on historical information.

No pictures of the first meetinghouse exist, but according to old Parish records, it was described as "a rough hewn structure, built of logs," according to a later description by Rev. Francis B. Hornbrooke, thirty-three feet square, with a hard dirt floor and wooden benches. The little congregation of 18 men (women were not members at first) and their families who met in this humble dwelling "were called together," said Rev. Hornbrooke, "not by the ringing of any bell, but by the beating of a drum. It was fitting that a people should be called to worship as they were called to the defense of their homes." [1]

According to custom, men sat on one side, women and girls on the other, and boys somewhere under the watchful eye of the tithing man. A minister of that day timed his sermon with an hourglass and often turned it over for several runs of sand. Pity the poor boy who grew restless and fidgety and was made to go and sit with his mother and sisters! Although this building was used for the next twenty-four years for all church and town meetings, it was never completed.

2. The 1722 Church

The 1722 Church, updated in 1800.

By 1721, the rustic little meetinghouse, sadly in need of repair and no longer large enough to accommodate the growing congregation, was torn down, and a new, larger colonial style meetinghouse was erected.

It was built of solid oak timber with a bell tower and large windows. The interior had a gallery around three sides, square, high-backed pews, hinged seats called slam seats, and a raised pulpit with a sounding board. A small Canadian bell, brought back from Canada by Weston soldiers who served in the French and Indian Wars, hung in the bell tower.

In 1800 this meetinghouse was completly updated. It was repaired and painted, two porches adjoined, as well as a steeple added to the lower tower, and a much larger bell ordered from the Paul Revere foundry. Weighing 997 lbs. and costing $72.88, raised by private subscription, it bears the inscription: ''P.R. and Sons, 1801,'' and remains today one of the church's most cherished possessions.

This meetinghouse, having already stood for seventy-eight years on ''Meeting House Common,'' as the areaa had been known, was to serve the parish needs for another 40 years, a total of 118 years in all.

"The meeting houses, as they were always called, were icy cold in winter, for there was no means of heating them, and the women sometimes carried little foot-stoves filled with live coals to keep their feet warm during the service. Men sometimes brought their dogs to serve as foot muffs. When stoves were first introduced, they met with great opposition in some congregations. Alice M. Earle, author of a book on early customs, tells an amusing story about their first use, one of which is that in Litchfield, Conn., a woman fainted on account of the great heat from the stove, only to be told on recovery that there had been no fire lighted in it." The first stove appeared at the First Parish meetinghouse in 1815 and was a most welcome addition.[2]

Lack of heat was not the only hardship in early day churches. Not every sermon was lively. Hence no wonder that at a meeting of the church held on April 27, 1726, it was voted as a general sentiment that "turning ye back towards the minister to gaze abroad, and laying down ye head upon ye arms, in a sleepy position, in ye time of public worship, are postures irreverent and indecent, and which ought to be reformed where any are faulty therein, and carefully avoided." [3]

None of our past churches have ever burned down (as often rumored). As each new church was built, the old one was carefully dismantled, and the material and furnishings sold off. The only serious fire associated with the church was the one at the parsonage, formerly the Benjamin Pierce Tavern, that was purchased by Rev. Samuel Kendal when he came to Weston in 1783.

A favorite anecdote about Dr. Kendal regarding the parsonage fire reveals his keen sense of humor. On a cold winter night in February, 1791, as he stood by, helplessly watching his home burn to the ground, Dr. Kendal, knowing his books, writings and sermons were going up in flames, good-naturedly quipped, "For once, at least, my sermons were able to give light." [4]

3. The 1840 Church

First Parish Church, Weston 1840

After the birth of the independent United States, most states, Massachusetts included, followed to a larger or smaller degree Virginia's enactment of the Statute of Religious Liberty, written by Thomas Jefferson, which called for the complete separation of church and state.

As Weston grew in population and diversity, the inevitable separation of church and town government also came about, and in 1839 plans for a new building began to take place. After many emotionally charged meetings it became clear that two new buildings would have to be built, a new church and a new Town House. Thus the venerable landmark, the colonial meetinghouse that stood on Meetinghouse Common for 119 years, was dismantled, and the material and furnishings were sold at public auction. Many parishoners were sorry to see the old church removed, and their feelings were probably best described by Col. Daniel Lamson, author of the seminal book on Weston history, in which he writes: "There was an air of solemn dignity, an emphasis of religious fervor, which this old church typified, that empresses the beholder with a reverence its successor never succeeded in doing. The destruction of this old landmark, built of solid oak, and replaced by a monstrosity which only a nineteenth century architect could devise, shows both a lack of reverence and the decay of faith — a marked trait of our times." [5]

The 1840 church, our third church, followed the Greek Revival style of architecture so popular in the early nineteenth century. It was a wooden building, smaller, plainer and nowhere near as elegant as its predecessor. It was erected a little to the east of the old one on adjoining land that was donated by Mrs. Clarissa Smith. It faced the west, with the entrance porch nearly on a line with the present Parish House, and the Country Road (now the Boston Post Road), passed a few feet in front of the church steps. As it was built soley for church purposes "and no other," a committee was set up by the town to build a separate Town Hall which was completed in 1847.

4. The 1888 Church

For forty-seven years, the "1840 Church" served the First Parish well. As it gradually fell into disrepair, and the desire for a larger, more attractive edifice was felt, a committee was once again appointed to look into the possibilities of building a new church. On April 7, 1884, the committee unanimously recommended "that the Parish build a new church edifice of stone, its cost not to exceed $10,000, provided $8,000 is pledged during the ensuing year and the full amount of $10,000 before the building is begun." [6] These conditions were quickly met, and the work on the new church began immediately.

The firm of Peabody & Sterns was selected as the architects and they designed what was considered at that time to be a somewhat controversial and dramatic structure. It was designed in the style of the Norman Gothic churches of the English countryside, as recently seen and admired by two very influential members and generous benefactors of the First Parish, Horace Sears and Arthur Coburn.

"Building a Norman Gothic structure in a Puritan country town was not without its critics," said Rev. Harry Hoehler in his sermon honoring the 275th Anniversary of the First Parish. "There were those who believed the proposed church violated the architectural integrity of the town. Others objected because the new church would look more like an Anglican chapel than a Unitarian meetinghouse." [7]

Many parishoners, however, appreciated the fact that the building was to be made of native field stones which they could readily and cheaply supply. Thus, as the local farmers hauled wagon-loads of stone from their fields and farms to the center of town — to the same green knoll where their forefathers had gathered so many years ago — the new, and remaining church was built in 1888. The stones for the flooring of the north and south porches of this church were collected at the seashore by the members of the Sunday school.

In April, 1875, General Charles J. Paine, of Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, and a summer resident of Weston, gave the Town of Weston, a Town Clock, leaving it optional where it should be placed.

At the next town meeting it was "voted to accept the gift and to place the clock in the tower of the First Parish Church, as the most convenient and conspicuous place, providing the said "Society" give its consent." This the "Society" did.

When the church, built in 1840, was taken down to be replaced by the present stone church (see front page) due notice was given. On a biting cold day in February, 1888, the Town Fathers — Selectmen, Treasurers, Assessors, Town Clerk — met on the Church Common to witness the removal of the clock. The faces, the hands, and the delicate machinery were carefully housed until the new bell tower was built. At the same time the Paul Revere bell was lowered and taken for temporary safekeeping to the coach-house on the Jones Estate.

Eventually, the much awaited day arrived. Clock and bell back in place, the parishoners gratefully listened to the "Dedication Hymn" composed for the occasion by Harriet Ware Hall (see below). This stone church has survived safely over one hundred years and keeps serving faithfully its growing number of members.

Dedication Hymn

The rugged product of our soil
The stones that vex our farming toil,
We took to build our holy place —
They rise to glory and to grace.

So shall the worship offered here.
Still keep our earth to heaven near,
And out of earthly joys and cares
We'll build our praises and our prayers.

What fills our lives, or great or small,
To thee, dear Lord, we bring it all;
We bring ourselves, that here may be
Of living stones a house for thee.

[1] Francis B. Hornbrooke, "First Parish, Weston, Founded 1698," sermon at dedication service. March 28, 1888, p.26.

[2] Elizabeth S. Coburn, "History of the First Parish, Weston, Massachusetts," Weston, Mass: The Women's Alliance, 1921, p. 7

[3] Emma Ripley, "The First Parish in Westn 1698-1948," pamphlet published by the Parish for the 250th anniversary celebration of the church, 1948, p. 9.

[4] Emma F. Ripley, Weston, A Puritan Town (Weston, Mass.: The Benevolent-Alliance of the First Parish, 1961), p. 72.

[5] Daniel S. Lamson, History of the Town of Weston (Boston: By the author, 1913), p. 11.

[6] Ripley, Weston, p. 72.

[7] Harry H. Hoehler, "275th Anniversary Sermons and Anniversary Prayers, The Middle Years," sermon on December 2, 1973, p. 8

Mary Maynard

Mary Maynard is the author of five books on New England and the Chair of the First Parish Historians' Committee.

THE DEMMON-MORRISON HOUSE
235 WELLESLEY STREET
WESTON, MA

Of the major country houses erected at the turn of the century which helped give Weston claim to the title "Lenox of the East," the Demmon-Morrison house on Wellesley Street is one which retains a sense of its original character. The stately red brick mansion cresting one of the major eminences of the town still faces serenely into the east as it did when its original owner relaxed on its broad terrace peering down the vista to the Bulfinch dome of the State House. Constructed in 1899-1900 as a wooden clapboard sheathed building, the house was brick veneered in 1914 without essentially altering the original structure. Today the 165+ acre estate is the site of Regis College, and the mansion is the residence of its president.

The story of this house reveals many aspects of an affluent lifestyle at the turn of the century. The major ingredients: a sizeable fortune, a fashionably situated urban residence, and an expansive country seat in a town readily accessible to the city were blended uniquely during the lifetime of Daniel Lake Demmon and exemplified in his country residence in Weston where he lived grandly but unostentatiously in the style of a merchant prince. The exterior changes brought about by his daughter Fannie continue the story, giving evidence of a changing concept of country elegance in the first decades of the twentieth century.

When the Demmons decided in 1888-1889 to invest in a country residence and to locate it in Weston, they were moving in the mainstream of upper class American thought. Whereas in a previous era certain "watering places" and hotel resorts were highly fashionable and "de rigueur" for the newly rich, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century this practice had given way to private ownership of summer villas. In issues dating from the 1890s, magazines like *House Beautiful* were reporting that to own the smallest cottage in the country was preferable to renting the most elegant suite in a resort hotel. Interest in styles and locations was fed by these magazines and by Sunday newspaper specials on "great country houses," complete with line drawings, suggestions, and recommendations.

To a businessman whose presence at his office was required with some regularity, Weston was an ideal residential area. Located a short twelve miles from the city and connected to all the major points in the East by three railroad lines which threaded their way through the town, Weston offered a quiet country atmosphere, large tracts of property to form the basis of an estate, and an attitude hospitable to the influx of the wealthy merchant who could enjoy the role of gentleman farmer during the summer. The importance of the short half hour ride to the city was matched by the low tax rate ($9.80 in 1900) and the sparse population (1834 per 16.8 square miles). Add the conveniences of sewers, electric lighting, and macadamized roads, and the attraction was complete.[1] These were among the features which caused Weston to be compared with Lenox in western Massachusetts, offering a similar summer haven to New York capitalists.

Demmon's wealth grew during the 1860s and 70s from interests and investments in copper and coal, railroad expansion, and real estate. His rapidly growing fortune was further invested in prime real estate properties in Boston and Somerville. He owned property on downtown Washington Street valued at half a million, a quarter of a million in the Harrison Avenue district and close to $100,000 in the Back Bay area.[2]

The original Demmon-Morrison House: notice the clapboards.

When the Hosea Davis farm on Wellesley Street in Weston became available in 1889, due to the death of its owner, Demmon purchased the homestead, barn and 104 acres of land for $8000.[3] Demmon and his daughter Fannie began the pattern of living which was to continue for the next two decades, enjoying their summer residence from early May until as late as Thanksgiving some years, and returning to their fashionable town-house on Beacon Street for cozy winters. Evaluated in 1888 at $4500: $1800 for buildings and $2700 for land, after a full year in Demmon's control the tax value of the property had increased to $6000: $2500 for the buildings and $3500 for land.[4] Demmon continued to operate the farm to the same degree that Hosea Davis had, maintaining horses and a few cows, raising vegetables, and keeping apple orchards. In 1891 a small twenty acre plot was added to the Chestnut Street side of the property, as under Demmon's direction the estate continued to grow in size, beauty, and value.

A topographical study, commissioned by Demmon in 1896 from the firm of John McClintock,[5] was more than likely associated with the plan for the Metropolitan water system. An aqueduct running from the Sudbury River to the Chestnut Hill Reservoir required an "equalizing" reservoir in Weston.[6] The plan, submitted to the Legislature in 1895, was approved in 1900 and initiated in 1901. Demmon was one of seven Weston residents involved in the land taking on the eastern side of Wellesley Street for the Weston part of the project. Despite this, Demmon continued to develop his estate, perhaps because of the prestige of the designing firm, the Olmstead Brothers. Between 1897 and 1899 four separate land parcels approximating 55 acres were purchased in Fannie's name, all contiguous to the original farm.[7] The most important of these was the Deavale (Devaive)-Keller property and homestead south of the Davis farm on the western side of Wellesley Street purchased for $6500 in March of 1899.

Fannie Demmon lived in the Deavale homestead that summer, refurbished it and beautified the property.[8] In August her engagement to Barnabas Thacher Morrison, identified as treasurer of the Reading Rubber Company, was announced, and the wedding took place on October 16, 1899 in the Arlington Street Church, Back Bay.[9] While the couple toured Europe, Demmon began the construction of a new mansion house situated on the highest land of the estate, the Deavale-Keller parcel, facing directly toward the rising sun, the newly created area of green around the Weston reservoir, and the direct view downtown to the Statehouse dome.[10]

The Demmon-Morrison House, after a new brick facade replaced the clapboards in 1914.

Unfortunately no information exists relating to the architect or the plans of this house; however, the mansion to which the family adjourned in the summer of 1890 was a splendid two story neo-Georgian structure located about a quarter of a mile from the street at an angle on the hillside. A winding entrance drive circled under a porte-cochere, passed around the rear of the building, and returned to the street. The whole effect, carefully sought and achieved, was one of largesse, of demonstrable wealth and elegance, the country seat of a merchant prince and gentleman farmer.

The house represented classicizing containment in its boxlike shape, combined with a wonderful openness and freedom in terrace, portico, and porch treatment. Sheathed in clapboard, it was set on a richly balustraded broad terrace rising from a man-made foundation of natural rock. Several broad steps led to the terrace, from which rose an imposing pair of pedestalled, free-standing, wooden ionic columns, two stories high. The entablature of these columns supported a classical pediment featuring a fanlight window as a focal accent. Recessed within the protecting shelter of the columned portico was an oversized oak entry door, tabernacle framed by traceried glass and surmounted by a balustraded second-story porch.

On either side of the portico were two symmetrical double-hung sash windows surmounted on the first floor by triangular pediments while the upper windows featured simple flat lintels. The corners of the mansion were decorated by pedestalled ionic pilasters whose entablature repeated that of the portico. The rectangular block of the mansion was capped by a hipped roof with a delicate balustrade repeating the design of the second story porch. Two dormer windows projected on either side of the center bay topped by broken pediments. To the right of the main block jutted a centrally placed enclosed porch or sun parlor, confined within the terrace area and entered directly from it. This was surmounted by an entablature repeating the central motif and supporting a balustrade repeating the roof and second story porch theme.

To the left of the mansion jutted a similarly placed structure which served as a portico for the entrance from the driveway, but also extended over the road as porte-cochere. The portion which served as a portico matched the porch extension on the right side in entablature, but the porte-cochere was supported by double, free-standing, ionic detailed columns at the four corners. The entire extension was balustraded as the right side, roof, and second story porch. The porte-cochere provided an exception to the otherwise strictly symmetrical structure.

The outward contour of the Demmon House bore a striking resemblance to the Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House (1759, 1793) in its rectangular two story elevation, its yellow clapboarding with white trim and black shutters, and especially in its center bay treatment. The structure was so similar that one could wonder if Demmon, who knew the Cambridge area well, had requested his builder to imitate it. The Demmon House facade, however, was flat planed and achieved the center projection by means of free standing columns, while the Longfellow House had a projecting bay of nine inches with the decorative pediment supported by pilasters.[11] The Longfellow House also carried twin dormers with a simple pediment, a balustraded double hipped roof, side projections, and a balustraded grass terrace. All these combined to create an overall effect of striking similarity.

But the Demmon House more truly evoked the period in which it was built. Examining the H.A.C. Taylor House (1885-86) in Newport by McKim, Mead and White, one is also struck by a similarity of style which had no basis in structural similitude as in the Longfellow House. Instead, the likeness was more a spiritual evocation, an airy lightness, an outward stretching that defied containment within the rectangular block of the colonial tradition. This quality is best illustrated in these two houses by the balustrading of roof and porches in the same delicate tensile pattern and the terrace treatment which symbolized both expansiveness and unity as it reached out like the roots of a tree to master the soil which nourished it and at the same time served as a barrier to all intrusion. The effect was at once flamboyant and restrained: flamboyant in decorative detail, restrained by the exactitude of architectural expression of the Georgian style.

The interior of the Demmon House was also closer in spirit and plan to the H.A.C. Taylor House than to the Longfellow House, and this difference typified the contrast between the colonial and neo-colonial style. The closed contained feeling of colonial space divisions gave way to a spaciousness that began in the entry hall and continued in the wide open stairwell and the broad doorways. Entering the house through the main lawn/terrace doorway, one came immediately into the broad stair-hall living room which stretched the full length of the main block of the dwelling. This room was dominated by the five foot wide stairwell ascending on the right of the room, transversely crossing at

the landing to form a centrally bowed balcony before rising to the second floor. The stairs had a naturally stained oak tread; a dark mahogany smooth flowing handrail terminated at the newel with an elegant double twist. In overall effect (except for the balcony) it bore striking resemblance to colonial stairwells, in particular to Arthur Little's line drawing of the Cabot House, Salem (1755) stairwell, from his collection which did so much to inspire the neo-colonial revival.[12]

The landing/balcony was lighted by a triple double casement window of traceried glass, the upper halves highlighted by stained glass crest figures. Tucked beneath the balcony, in inglenook style, was a fireplace whose six foot mantle was flanked by ionic pilasters. Matching engaged piers supported the balcony, and one free-standing ionic column both centered the fireplace location and formed a passageway to the servants' area beyond. The exposed ceiling beams, the two and a half foot wainscotting throughout the house, and the ceiling cornice were all painted creamy white in keeping with the style then in vogue: dark wood in urban homes, white for summer and/or country homes.

To the left of the entrance hall, centrally situated, was the passageway leading to the porte-cochere entrance, lighted from the traceried glass panels which framed the door. To the left of this passage was a small reception room with a pink marble fireplace topped by a six and half foot mantle. Two windows faced the lawn, one the drive; all surmounted by a molding which echoed the architrave of a classic entablature. To the right of the passage was a somewhat larger dining room with triple double-hung sash windows forming a semi-circular bay facing out to the drive and the garden area beyond. The right side of the room was dominated by an eight foot fireplace, flanked by double ionic columns, which jutted two feet into the room forming two recessed areas on either side. The recessed area to the left of the fireplace contained the entrance to the butler's pantry and the serving area.

On the right of the main entrance hall a seven foot opening led to the parlor, which stretched the whole length of the central block of the house. In contrast to other rooms, the parlor featured Corinthian details to dramatize its superiority. The fireplace dominated one end of the room with its seven and a half foot mantle, framed by two free-standing eight foot Corinthian columns with an elaborately bracketed cornice. Matching alcoves in the four corners of the room were set off by free-standing Corinthian columns enclosing the window areas. Opening off the far wall of this parlor was a heavy oak door, tabernacle framed with traceried glass sidelights and fanlight Palladian accent above, which originally opened into the sun room/porch area noted in the exterior description.

The stairhall, reception, dining and living rooms encompassed the whole rectangular block of the first floor living quarters. Lovely oak floors were laid throughout the house without thresholds. Concealed sliding doors could be drawn for privacy or left open to create a sense of flowing space, contained, yet free. Brass chandeliers and matching wall sconces, all with spherical globes, were featured throughout. The placement of fireplaces was distinctly modern in this neo-colonial home, since there was no sense of economy of chimney structure. Each fireplace has its own chimney. The whole tone of the house was modern.

The impact of the H.A.C. Taylor House of McKim, Mead, and White on the reinterpretation of classical/colonial domestic architecture was pivotal. The plan had emphasized the Palladian-colonial system of the axial central hall with two rooms on each side and service wing located on a cross axis.[13] The Demmon House plan is strikingly

similar in the layout of the central block but the cross axis is achieved by the extension of the sun parlor and porte-cochere. This sense of dependencies to the main block was further accentuated in the more formal refurbishing of the exterior which took place in 1914.

In February of 1908 Daniel Demmon died at the age of 76. Within two years Fannie and her husband Barnabas abandoned their Chestnut Street townhouse, made the Weston property their permanent residence and soon determined to formalize the character of the house. The brick veneering which they commissioned in 1914 was entrusted to Samuel Mead of Weston, an architect who had been associated with the firms of Ware and Van Brunt, Cabot and Chandler, and finaly Cabot, Everett and Mead.[14] Brick veneering older houses was not a trend in Weston at this time. It was an independent departure for the Morrisons to make this decision, since even the larger houses in Weston built in the first decades of the twentieth century survive, if at all, in wooden frame form.

The new home was a striking contract to the pillared frame structure. The terrace was enclosed by a brick and granite balustrade with formal urns and jardinieres as decorative effects. Simple French doors with a traceried glass overhang were granite enclosed, flanked by Corinthian pilasters carrying a semi-circular broken pediment housing a classical garlanded urn. This center bay, extended three feet from the old structure to afford a protected entry, opened onto the original entrance door with the traceried glass tabernacle frame. This three foot extension necessitated the removal of the second floor balcony, leaving a slightly recessed triple window over the entrance. The center bay was outlined in a simply bracketed roof cornice surmounted by a formal escutcheon with side urns for decorative effect.

The window treatment of the main block of the building remained unchanged except for material, granite triangular pediments on the first floor and flat arches with keystone crowns on the second floor. Unlike the clapboard structure, these pediments appear not as appendages or decoration, but as integral elements of the structure of the building. Three dormers, whose triangular pediments echoed those of the first floor, jutted from the hipped roof now slated and simply turned at the peak. A granite string course outlined the second story, and the simple bracketed cornice continued the roof treatment throughout.

A fundamental change was evident to the right of the structure where the simple terrace porch gave way to an expanded sun room outlined in three sections with granite pilasters topped with urns. To the left, the porte-cochere also assumed a brick and granite formality, the structure basically unchanged from the original except for the substitution of red brick and granite. The second house provides a stricter interpretation of Georgian formality and symmetry. The extension of the sun room corrected the imbalance on the first.

During 1915 Barnabas Morrison's health failed. At his death in 1921, the center of Fannie's world shifted to Pasadena, California, where she became one of the original benefactors of the Pasadena Playhouse as well as of a local hospital. She soon determined to sell the Weston property. The Weston Town Report of 1927 listed her as a non-resident, and before the year was over, the property had become the possession of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston for $225,000. In September of that year the mansion house provided an administrative center, library, residence hall, chapel, and dining room for the fifty-five students who became the pioneer class of Regis College.

Except for the removal of the porte-cochere and side entrance portico in the pragmatic fifties to allow for free traffic on the driveway, the building remains as an outstanding example of the neo-Georgian style of American domestic architecture at the turn of the century.

ENDNOTES

[1] Boston Sunday Herald, May 11, 1902.

[2] Will of Daniel Demmon, Middlesex Probate Court; Boston Daily Globe, February 10, 1908.

[3] Middlesex County Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, Book 1946, p. 6-8.

[4] Weston Town Reports, 1888-1891.

[5] John McClintock, "Topographical Plan of the Estate of Daniel L. Demmon," Weston, MA, November, 1896, Regis College Archives.

[6] Dorothy Ellis, "The Weston Reservoir," Weston Historical Commission, 1979.

[7] Middlesex County Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, Book 2358, f. 501; Book 2402, f. 505; Book 2596, f. 363; Book 2572, f. 457.

[8] Waltham Free Press, June 26, July 14, August 18, 1899.

[9] Boston Sunday Globe, October 22, 1899.

[10] Waltham Free Press, November 17, December 8, 1899.

[11] Bainbridge Bunting and Robert Nylander, Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge. Book Four: Old Cambridge, Cambridge, 1973, p. 80.

[12] Arthur Little, Early New England Interiors, Boston, 1878.

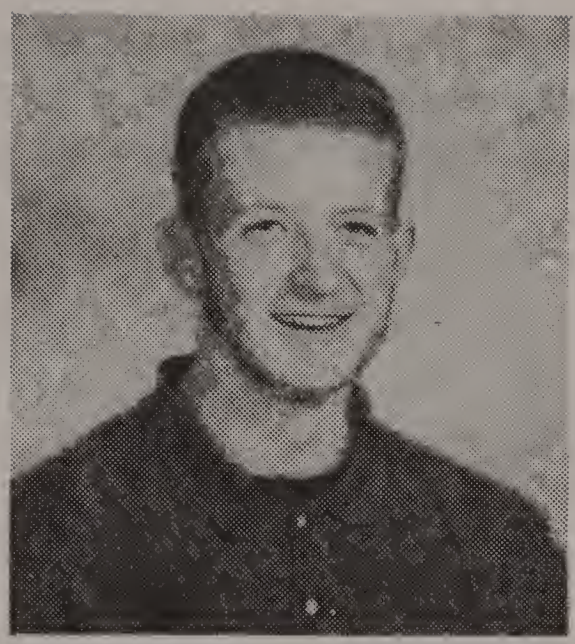
[13] Vincent Scully, The Shingle Style and the Stick Style, rev. ed., New Haven, 1978.

[14] Charles Mead (son) to Catherine Meade, April, 1980.

Sister Catherine M. Meade is a native of Dorchester, Massachusetts. She recieved her Ph.D. in American History from Boston College in 1972. She was chairman of the Department of History at Regis College from 1981 to 1994, and has been co-chairman since then. Her book My Nature is Fire (New York: Alba House, 1991) is a study of the medieval mystic Catherine of Siena. Her article on the Demmon-Morrison House is an abbreviated form of her longer study of this landmark. Sister Caherine has lectured far and wide on Catherine of Siena and on the Demmon-Morrison House, among others at the Bay State Historical League, the American Association of University Women, and in 1991 at the Weston Historical Society. Her upcoming lecture on the house will take place at the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the founding of Regis College this October.

Is there anything new under the sun?

"It's intolerable, General Washington. The farmers of Valley Forge deserve more consideration. Drilling at all hours, drums scaring the livestock, and several chickens stolen. We have friends in the Continental Congress, you know . . ."



Bill Martin, Jr.

SKIING AT CAT ROCK: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

During the winter of 1995-1996, it seemed as if every week was broken up by a snow day. But unlike most high school students, I did not spend those days inside eating popcorn and playing Nintendo — not when there were feet upon feet of fresh powder lying untouched on Cat Rock, near Drabbington Way.

Instead, I gathered up my friends, braved treacherous driving conditions and hiked up Cat Rock. We were rewarded with soft snow, tight glades, large cliffs, and most importantly, no ski patrol. It was like having a little slice of heaven right here on the north side of Weston. At Cat Rock, hardcore Weston skiers can venture into the woods, hurl themselves off cliffs, do just about anything thay want, without having to worry about ski patrollers clipping lift tickets, and without any annoyances presented by intermediate skiers crowding up the slopes. Right now, there is only one drawback to the skiing at Cat Rock, and it is a major one. Cat Rock today exists with the ''Earn Your Turns'' philosophy. For every vertical foot one can ski down, one must be hiked up. The lone rope tow now stands rusty and dormant, lifeless for more than a decade.

Skiing at Cat Rock was not always for extreme ski wannabes who lived to hurl themselves down the most dangerous mountainsides they could find and did not mind if they had to slog up those very mountains to do it. Cat Rock was once an operating ski area, where Weston families could learn to ski on one open slope and a narrow trail, accessed by a rope tow. Those days are gone now, and the only people who ski at Cat Rock nowadays are the skiers who shun groomed trails and look upon managed ski areas with disgust. Cat Rock has become wild and untamed.

In the early 1950s a group of local skiers set up a rope tow on Cat Rock and cut a couple of trails down the hill, establishing the privately owned Cat Rock ski area. During the fifites the Cat Rock ski area was open to anyone who wanted to ski there. It was fairly popular because other ski hills in the Boston area, such as Nashoba Valley and Wachusett Mountain had yet to open. At the time, Cat Rock had one open ski slope and a wooded trail, a rope tow, and a small tin warming hut with a stove inside. Cat Rock was only open on weekends, and many residents of the western suburbs would ski there, if they could not make it up to the larger ski areas in New Hampshire and Vermont.

Weston resident Ed Dickson was one of the owners of the area when it opened. He recalled that the owners did all the work there. Unlike ski areas today, in which the ski patrol, lift operators, and grooming crew are all separate entities, at Cat Rock in the fifties the small group of private owners did all three jobs and more.

On days when the lift was running, Dickson remembered ''taking turns running the rope with the other owners.'' The owners would run the tow and charge people who came to ski one dollar for a lift ticket. In addition to ensuring the safety of the riders of the rope tow, the operators also had to deal with the donkey engine that pulled the rope, which often broke down, as well as with the rope itself, which was cut by vandals or sometimes broke.

As well as running the rope tow, the owners also groomed the slope by hand. They would use rakes, shovels and hoes to cover up bare patches and smooth out rough spots to make the slope easier and safer to ski. Grooming was a constant process, according to Dickson, because the snow underneath the rope tow was always being worn off. Unlike ski areas today, Cat Rock had no snowmaking machine and had to rely on what mother nature saw fit to drop on it. Because of the lack of artificial snowmaking, the grooming crew had very little work to do. Dickson recalls often having to shut down the ski area because it was too icy. The season at Cat Rock was short, compared to ski areas today. When Dickson co-owned it, the season usually ran from Christmas to March and was often stopped in the middle by the typical New England January thaw.

The same men who were the administrators, financiers, lift operators, and groomers also patrolled the mountain to keep skiers safe. Dickson, a member of the National Ski Patrol, said that in addition to patrolling the mountain and rescuing injured skiers, the Cat Rock ski patrol gave informal lessons. If a child did not know how to ski, one of the co-owners who happened to be patrolling the mountain would give the young skier a few pointers on the narrow wooded trail coming off the open slope.

Cat Rock remained privately owned until the early sixties, when the group of private owners was overcome by the financial difficulties of maintaining the ski area. The town of Weston bought the ski area from the private owners and passed operation of the ski area into the hands of the Weston Recreation Department.

Under the Recreation Department, Cat Rock itself did not change much. It was still just a rope that was pulled up a hill by a donkey engine. The big difference was that now only Weston residents could ski at Cat Rock. A season pass, in the form of a badge, cost twenty-five dollars, and, as Weston resident Joe Sheehan recalls, just about every skier in Weston had one. Sheehan started skiing at Cat Rock when he was about ten and skied there until he graduated from high school in 1973.

During the sixties and seventies, Cat Rock was crowded with Weston skiers every weekend. Sheehan remembers the ski area as "packed," and that there were fifteen minute lift lines, but at Cat Rock that was not so bad because everyone was just out to have fun, and everyone knew everyone else, Weston being the type of town that it is. According to Weston resident Ward Carter, Cat Rock was the place to go when people could not get up north, and in Sheehan's teenage days, skiing at Cat Rock was "the thing to do every weekend." To Sheehan, one of the nice things about skiing at Cat Rock was that there were so many people involved that skiing there was like a town event. Cat Rock really caught on during the skiing boom of the late sixties and early seventies, when skiing became repopularized by the freestyle movement. During this time Sheehan remembered kids building jumps to practice new tricks being introduced to the sport by the first generation of freestyle skiers.

Coupled with a resurgence of popularity for the sport of skiing in the late sixties were several very snowy winters. Joe Sheehan likened the winter of 1969 to that of 1995-96, in that there were major storms almost every week, and this string of good snow years helped Cat Rock stay open through the seventies.

In the early eighties, Cat Rock finally shut down, for a number of reasons. According to Ward Carter, the main reason was liability. In the insurance boom of the early eighties, liability insurance prices rose, and the town had difficulty covering them. Along with the

liability came new regulations that made the ski area difficult to run without significant changes. There were also problems with the shape that the ski area was in. The donkey engine running the rope was old and extremely unreliable, and vandals often cut the tow rope, both of which caused expensive problems. Its popularity also dwindled in the early eighties, with more and more skiers heading up north where there was snowmaking, grooming and high speed chairlifts. In the modernization rush of the eighties, Cat Rock fell by the wayside. In about 1983, the town decided to shut down Cat Rock because it was becoming a financial burden.

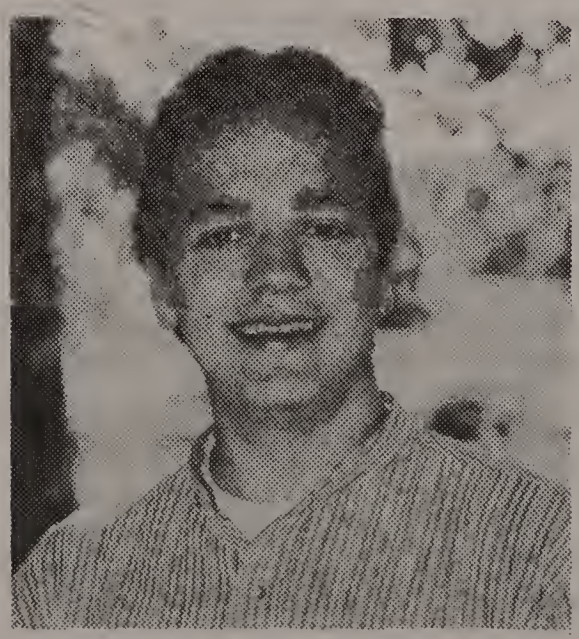
Today Cat Rock is a mecca for Weston's hardcore skiing population. With the extreme skiing movement of the early nineties, it became fashionable to jump off cliffs and ski as dangerously as possible. Skiing off groomed trails and into the forest has finally become the rage, and for the top skiers in Weston High School, Cat Rock is the place to be on snow days. Skiing at Cat Rock today means total freedom. Anything a skier wants to climb, he can ski. There are no boundary ropes saying, "If you ski this, you'll lose your lift ticket." There are no crowds of intermediate punters jamming the trail and destroying the snow. Skiing at Cat Rock today is skiing as it was meant to be, untamed, untouched by groomers and liability insurance, and free. There is of course the lack of a ski lift. Unfortunately, it looks as though there will never again be a lift at Cat Rock. It has become economically unfeasible. Both Joe Sheehan and Ed Dickson said that they would ski there if it were still open today, but the expenses of running a ski slope in the nineties are too high for a place like Cat Rock. Maybe it is better this way, my friends and I get the whole mountain to ourselves.

Thanks to Messrs. Ward Carter, Edward Dickson and Joseph Sheehan for providing information for this article.

William Martin, Jr.

We are pleased to print a piece of Weston sports history. Nevertheless, the editor, BULLETIN and the Weston Historical Society must enclose a disclaimer about supporting the idea of skiing described above. We are happy to welcome not one but two young contributors to our BULLETIN and hope that others from our schools or from colleges would share their thoughts and experiences with us.

Bill Martin, Jr., is a junior at Weston High School. He is an honors student, class president, center of the Weston High basketball team, and president of the Mountain Sports Club of Weston High. In his free time he enjoys mountain biking and skiing. Bill does most of his skiing in New Hampshire at the Mount Washington Valley, Attitash/Bear Peak, Wildcat, and Cannon, as well as in Tuckerman Revine. Ed.



Kristophe Karami

COULD THEODORE ROOSEVELT BE ELECTED PRESIDENT IN 1996?

With the assassination of President McKinley in 1901, Theodore Roosevelt, not quite 43, became the youngest president in the nation's history. He brought new excitement and power to the presidency and he vigorously led Congress and the American public toward progressive reforms and a strong foreign policy. He took the view that the president, as a "steward of the people," should take whatever action necessary for the public good, unless expressly forbidden by law or the constitution. "I did not usurp

power," he wrote, "but I did greatly broaden the use of executive power."

At the onset of his Presidency, Roosevelt created new directions in Washington in an effort to accommodate the developing reform movement. Like today, large corporations were gaining too much power. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act had been passed in 1890, but it had not been used to prosecute a trust, only unions. Meanwhile the changes in the business environment were phenomenal. Whole industries became dominated by a single company or a combination of companies controlled by a trust. Once it had a monopoly, a trust could unilaterally control prices and rack up huge profits. The king of trusts was J.P. Morgan, a banker who was to become the first target of Roosevelt's assault. Many progressives felt that all trusts were bad and should be abolished. Roosevelt was more moderate. He thought that the era of big business was inevitable, and that it had important economic benefits such as increased productivity and efficiency. In his opinion, there were good trusts and bad trusts. He only wanted to go after the ones that did not act in the public interest. In order to do this, he came up with the radical idea of actually enforcing existing law. On February 18, 1902 he directed the Department of Justice to use the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to prosecute the Northern Securities Company run by J.P. Morgan. Roosevelt was victorious in March of 1904 when the Supreme Court ruled against the Northern Securities Company and forced it to break up. This marked an important shift in the scope of government. Roosevelt became known as the "trust-buster." In 1902, when the anthracite coal miners struck, he became the first president to intervene successfully in a labor-management dispute, threatening to seize the mines in order to persuade their owners to accept mediation. Is there a leader alive today who could act in this manner?

Today we are interested in conservation. We are destroying our natural habitats in the name of progress. Theodore Roosevelt had the foresight, the vision, to protect some of our land from destruction. He was a staunch supporter of The Newlands Bill (1902) on forest reclamation and irrigation. 150 million acres of forest land were turned into federal reserves. Roosevelt established the National Conservation Conference. He also supported Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot in expanding the nation's forest reserves, encouraging conservation on the state level. Today, he would be favored by many through his support of conservation.

President Roosevelt was a nationalist who believed in our country's greatness. His conduct in foreign relations was even bolder and more vigorous than his domestic program. He justified "police power" in Santo Domingo to keep the Europeans out. After Columbia's rejection in 1903 of a treaty giving the United States rights to a canal across the isthmus of Panama, he supported a local revolution, then negotiated a treaty with the new government of Panama. He supervised the construction of the canal which reduced the distance from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific from approximately 14,000 miles to 5,000 miles.

According to his motto, "speak softly and carry a big stick," he signed the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine which allowed the intervention by the United States in the affairs of Western Hemisphere nations if their weakness or wrong-doing justified it. This restricted European activities in the Western Hemisphere and alleged that in cases of "chronic wrong-going," the United States could assume, "however reluctantly," the role of an international police power in our hemisphere, a role still played by the U.S. in places like Panama or Haiti. In 1905 Roosevelt settled the Russo-Japanese War through the Treaty of Portsmouth. This won him the Nobel Peace Prize and the distinction of being the first American to win such a notable award.

If Theodore Roosevelt were living today, he would make a very desirable candidate for the Republican Party. To begin with, he had a certain charisma that Senator Dole, the November 1996 Republican hopeful lacked. Roosevelt spoke confidently and acted the same way. He was a very physical man, a ''rough-rider,'' one of our cavalry volunteers who fought in the Spanish-American War. He was a man of the people and decried the ''malefactors of wealth'' through his reform proposals to Congress, including federal supervision of all interstate business. He strengthened the authority of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and promoted the Pure Food Act which called for the inspection of packing plants and prohibited the iterstate transportation of adulterated drugs or mislabeled foods..

I feel that if Theodore Roosevelt were living today, he could have been elected president. Courageous, moral, trustworthy, ethical, bold, uncompromising in matters of principle, Theodore Roosevelt could be a candidate to lead America into another century. He stood correctly, firmly on the issues. He had a strong conservationist policy, preserving our wilderness and our heritage for the future, and a strong social policy, stressing self-reliance with an occasional ''helping hand'' from government. For strong, decisive, moral leadership, Theodore Roosevelt would be our man! Where are the others like him? Is anyone out there even close to achieving what he has, even though I have mentioned only a few of his accomplishments? At the present time, the answer is, NO!

Kristophe Karami

Kristophe Karami is a senior at Weston High School and an Eagle Scout. This article is an abbreviated issue of the essay which won him second prize in the national competition sponsored by the Theodore Roosevelt Association of Cambridge. He is also last year's winner of the Sons of the American Revolution essay contest. We congratulate this budding historian and hope that his peers will be encouraged to submit their work to the BULLETIN. Ed.

WESTON HISTORY - Available and On Sale

Every Weston resident should have on his/her bookshelf both of these authors. They are also a most appropriate gift for your friends, family members and neighbors old and new. Here is your chance to acquire these books at an advantageous price:

1. Brenton H. Dickson: Once Upon a Pung, a collection of delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson: Random Recollections, more of the same, including several old Weston family histories, softcover, $7.50.
3. Brenton H. Dickson and Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts, hardcover, $7.50.

Also available:

Historical Map of Weston with a brief history of Weston, $1.00.

For orders of the map only enclose a business size SASE envelope. Make out checks to the Weston Historical Society and mail to Box 343, Weston, MA 02193. For immediate service, come to the Museum of the Society at the Josiah Smith Tavern, on Wesdnesdays between 10 and 12 a.m., or mail your order to Vera Laska, 50 Woodchester Drive, Weston, MA 02193.

INTRODUCING: GEORGE AMADON

George Amadon was born in Framingham Center, Massachusetts, in 1916. After Lawrence Academy and William and Mary College, he married his college sweetheart Betty, who hailed from Minnesota. They had a daughter Pat and a son Reed. He has seven grandchildren. George started his career as manager of quality control in a frozen food plant in California.

He spent three years in the Army Air Force, went on 37 missions over Japan, and merited the Distinguished Flying Cross and a Purple Heart. He moved to Weston in 1946, to the former Train Tavern House, built around 1800. He joined his father as a food broker, and later worked as manager of market development first for the Howard Johnson Company and later for Sears Roebuck as assistant manager of five divisions.

After retiring, he turned to maritime history. His book The Rise of the Ironclads (Missoula, Montana, Pictorial History Publishing Co., 1988) is in its fourth printing. He lectures far and wide on the subject.

He is a totum factum in Merriam Village, and is on the boards of the Boston Authors' Club, Weston Community Housing, West Suburban Elder Care; he is a member of the Crescent Street Historical Commission, an election officer, and Chairman of the Weston Memorial Day Committee. He is a Director of the Weston Historical Sociaty and vice chairman of its Museum committee, in charge of the photograph collection.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Global milestone: China's Deng Xiaoping died on Wednesday, February 19, 1997; he switched China to a new track, and the world is awaiting the direction his successor(s) will take.

*****

Population Today reported in its February, 1997 issue that as of October 1, 1996, the U.S. population stood at 266,109,000, while the estimated world population as of February, 1997 stood at 5.8 billion, with an annual growth of 88 million. Quo vadis, humanity?

*****

A recent real estate flyer lists 16 Weston houses for sale, at prices between $289,000 and $2,250,000. Weston has 3,208 single family homes, at an average value of $540,000, at an almost 14% average increase from last year.

*****

While our students are doing consistently well in national competitions academically, in February, 1997 some high school pranksters considered it a challenge to use the school computers to create phony ten dollar bills.

*****

The same month also saw the hanging of 270 pails on about 200 sugar maple trees by volunteers of Land's Sake, the non-profit organic farming group.

IN MEMORIAM
STEVE RILEY

We report with sadness that Stephen Thomas Riley (December 28, 1908 - February 15, 1997) is no longer with us. He was born in Worcester, but was a long-time resident of Weston, settling here in 1952. He was the director of the prestigious Massachusetts Historical Society, and from 1977 to 1984 president of our Society. He was the prototype of the scholar and gentleman. He will be missed by many of us whom he called friends and by his devoted wife Alice Riehle Riley.

His brief biography was published in the Fall, 1995 issue of this Bulletin.

REWARDS FOR YOUR DETECTIVE WORK

If you come to the Museum some Wednesday morning and manage to identify people or places in our photographs, you will be rewarded; for the identification of three (3) photos by the charming book on Weston history Once Upon a Pung; for identification of six (6) photos by the book One Town in the American Revolution; for the identification of 10 photos by one of the above books plus a one year membership to the Weston Historical Society.

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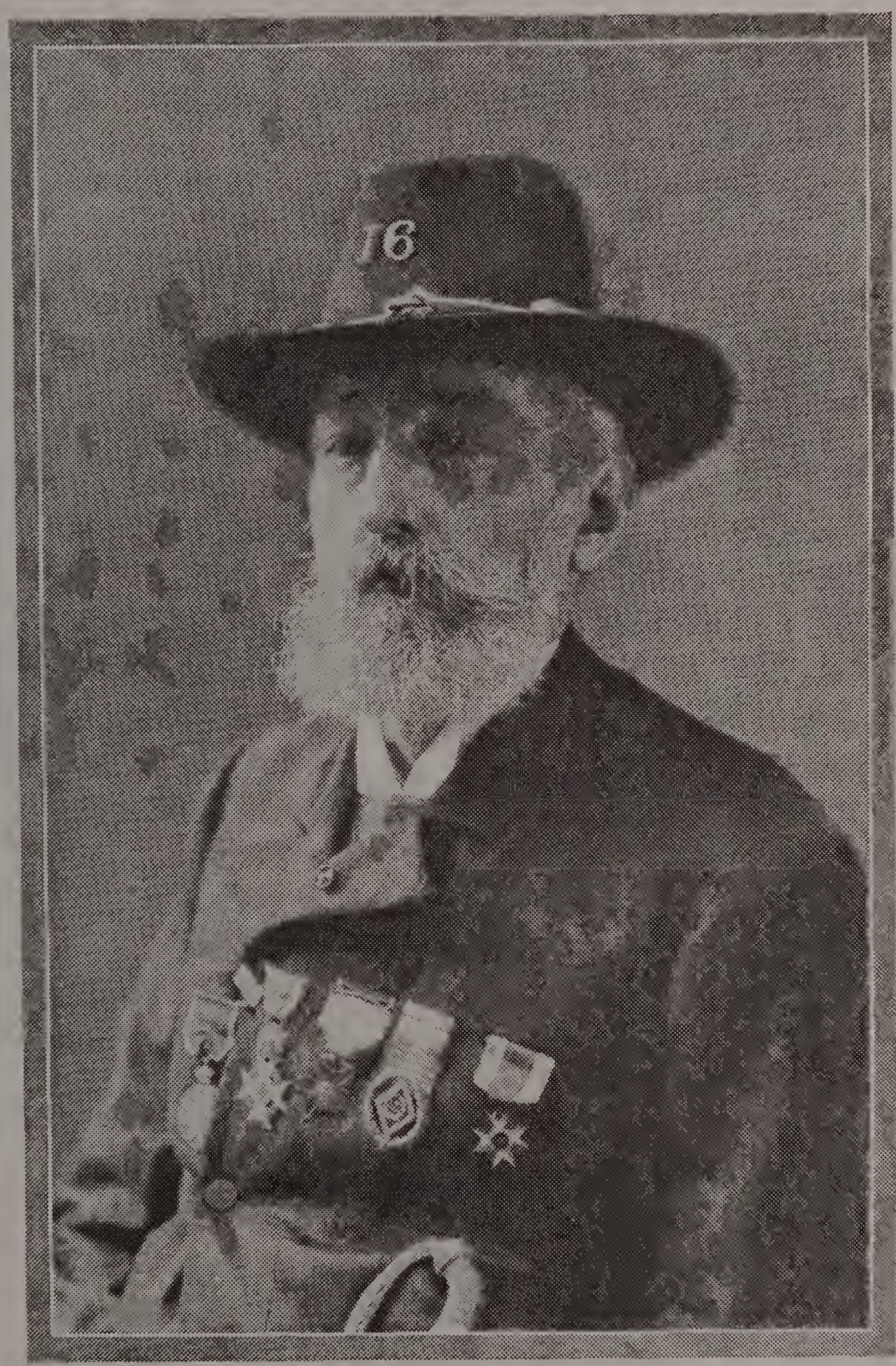
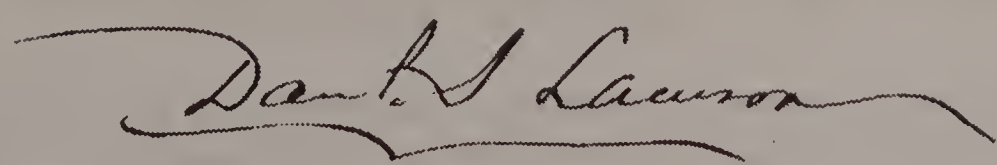
THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 1997 Volume XXVIII, No. 2





The Weston Historical Society is proud to present to its members and to all Weston residents and history aficionados the new edition of the classical HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF WESTON by Col. DANIEL S. LAMSON, originally published in 1913. The 1997 edition bears a new frontispiece of the author (above), a new introduction, and has been provided with a much desired 40 page INDEX, compiled during the Weston History Project.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AND THE SACRED COWS

One of the two "sacred cow" chairs

Having come only relatively recently to membership in the Weston Historical Society, and even more recently to my responsibilities as Society archivist, I had no way of knowing the background of many of the Society's eclectic acquisitions. A set of chairs particularly intrigued me. They were obviously out of place, even in the Museum's collection of widely disparate furniture. Two carved oak, high back, rush seat arm chairs just did not fit in. To add to the mystery, these chairs sported a hand written tag "The History of the 'Sacred Cow' — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle."

The task of organizing the Society's files does, however, have its rewards, and one of those rewards reached me the other day when I came across some correspondence which I reproduce here, much compressed, to make the point:

276 Glen Road
Weston, Mass 02193
March 2, 1966

Weston Historical Society, Inc.
Weston, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

Would you be interested in adding to your historical collection two chairs from the study of the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle? These carved oak chairs, made before 1750, were presented to Maude Hudnut Chapin in 1923, on the 25th anniversary of her marriage to Robert S. Chapin.

As to their authenticity, I am attaching a copy of an appraisal which my daughter, Barbara Hudnut Boston, has sent me with a note in which she expressed the hope that you will accept them without remuneration. I should appreciate hearing from you in this regard at your early convenience.

Yours sincerely,
(signed) Harriette Hudnut

The rest of the file contains the exchange of letters that completed the transfer, which, with one exception, have no relevance to this story. The exception follows:

This is not a proper letter but a hasty note to let you know that Mr. Boston and I are delighted that my late aunt's prized chairs will once again have a suitable home. They were treasured remembrances of her friendship of countless years with Sir Conan and Lady Conan Doyle. (Correction: Sir Arthur, I should have written.) Noone [sic] was allowed to sit on them since she had little red satin cords tied across them, and as a child I remember them sitting like thrones on the entrance hall of her apartment at 563 Park Avenue. (My cousin and I used to refer to them as the sacred cows!)

B. H. B.

You may see the "sacred cows" of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the Weston Historical Society Museum in the Josiah Smith Tavern. The Museum is open every Wednesday morning from ten to twelve. More about the chairs is related in the October, 1966 BULLETIN, p.5.

Douglas Henderson

REGIS COLLEGE: A CELEBRATION OF HERITAGE

As the academic year begins, Regis College rejoices in seventy years of dedication to the education of women in the Catholic, liberal arts tradition. This tradition dates back to seventeenth century France and the founding of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Le Puy. In keeping with the practice of celebrating the heritage of the college and its connections to the Sisters of St. Joseph, the following article has been drawn from the text of a presentation given at the college in March of this year.

The village of Le Puy was small, nestled in the area of southeastern France, known as the Velay. Its inhabitants were no strangers to hardship and poverty. Very often the survival of a household depended upon the tiny sum of one to five *sous*, that could be earned daily by a woman making lace. In this environment the foundation of a group of women religious who pledged themselves to respond to the needs of the "dear neighbor" occurred unnoticed by many.

Tradition tells us that the Sisters of St. Joseph came into being, formed by the Jesuit Ignatian exercises and conditioned by real poverty. They drew from the many layers of the society of the time, with the result that when the legal contract of association was presented in December of 1651, only one of the six members could sign her name, since the others were illiterate.

The "Little Design" of Father Jean Pierre Medaille flourished among the lacemakers of the Velay and the silk workers of Lyons. In the pre-revolution days of France the pattern of living in small groups among the people afforded the Sisters security to accomplish their works of mercy. Indeed, not only did they increase the number of their own houses, but they also established "workshops" which allowed unmarried women and widows to learn the art of lace making in order to earn a living.

When in 1789 the Reign of Terror began, the Sisters of St. Joseph were practically destroyed by the havoc wreaked upon the church by the state. Houses were closed. Sisters were sent into hiding. Documents were destroyed, and lives were in turmoil. Six of the Sisters lost their lives at the guillotine for the crimes of religious fanaticism or hiding members of the clergy.

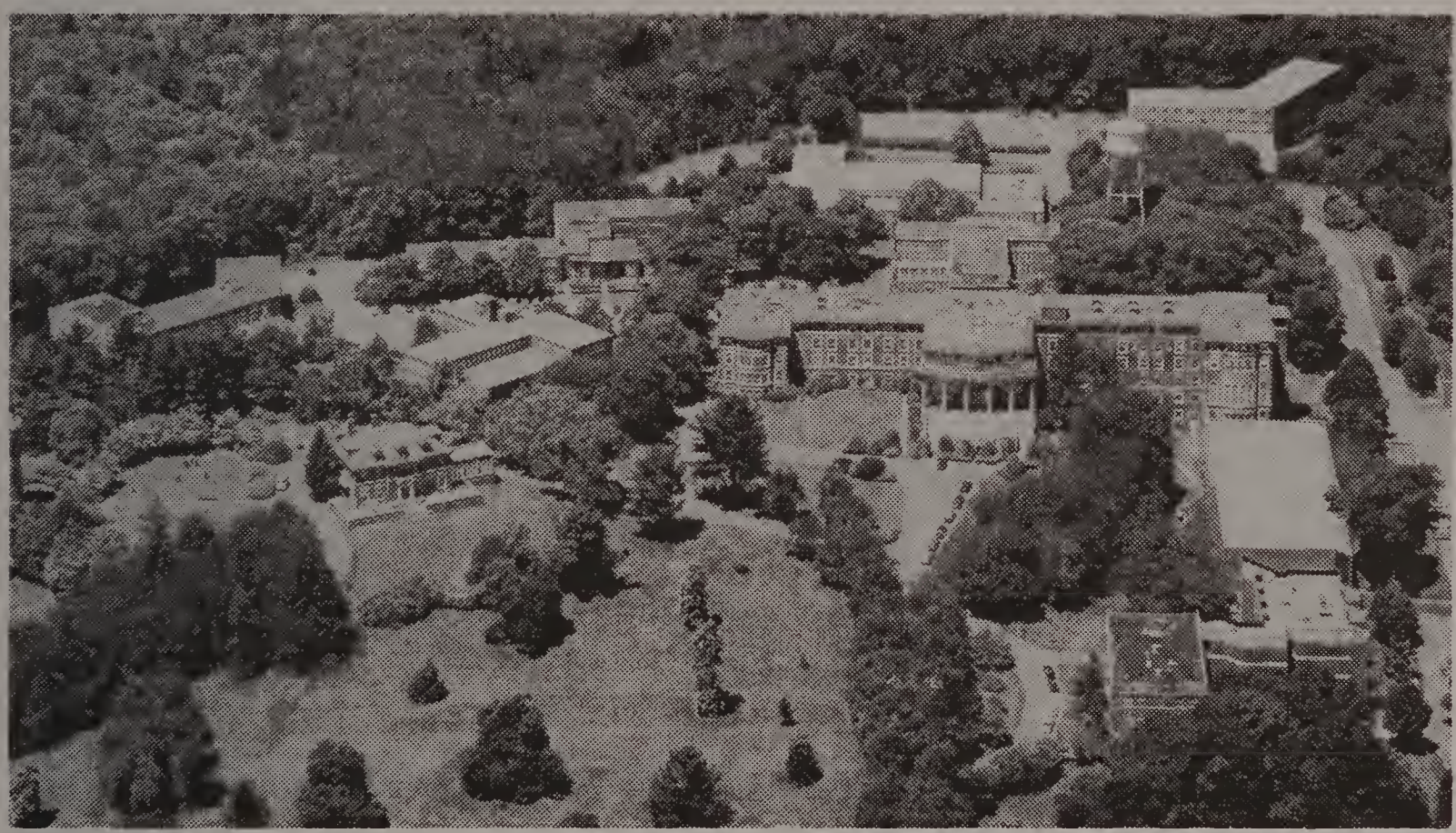
In 1801 Napoleon signed a concord with Pope Pius VII signaling the end of persecution of the church. In Lyons Cardinal Fesch summoned Jeanne Fontbonne, a survivor of the Revolution, from her family farm to re-establish the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph. At the age of fifty Jeanne set out for Lyons to begin anew. Eleven Sisters returned with Jeanne to Lyons, and on the day following her arrival another eight came to join them, bringing the number to twenty.

From 1808 until 1836 the group grew both in number and in works. Their reputation for service became well known, and when Bishop Joseph Rosati of St. Louis, Missouri sought Sisters to teach the deaf in his diocese, the Countess of Rochejacquelin intervened, recommending the Sisters of St. Joseph. Jeanne Fontbonne, then known as Mother St. John, asked for volunteers to be missionaries to America. To her surprise the first two who volunteered were her own nieces. Febronie and Delphine Fontbonne left in the company of four Sisters, one of whom had just received the habit. Two other sisters remained in France for an additional year to study techniques in the instruction of the deaf with the Sisters of St.

Charles. These women pioneers were between the ages of twenty-two and thirty-two as they embarked on their mission to the New World.

Their journey aboard the *Heidelberg* required forty-nine days to reach the port of New Orleans where they were warmly welcomed by the Ursuline Sisters and met their mentor, Bishop Rosati. Traveling up the Mississippi, the Sisters were amazed at the vast wilderness of their new country. They settled at Cahokia, Illinois, where life was somewhat tenuous. Poverty and the flooding river brought hazards that the Sisters viewed as challenges to be met in the spirit of trust in God.

From their modest beginnings at St. Louis the Sisters ventured forth not only to establish schools and academies for the education of young women, but also to evangelize the native American nations of the Sioux in the north central area and other nations as far away as Arizona. Turning eastward, they followed a trail which brought them to Philadelphia in 1847, to Brentwood, NY, in 1856, and on to Boston in 1873.



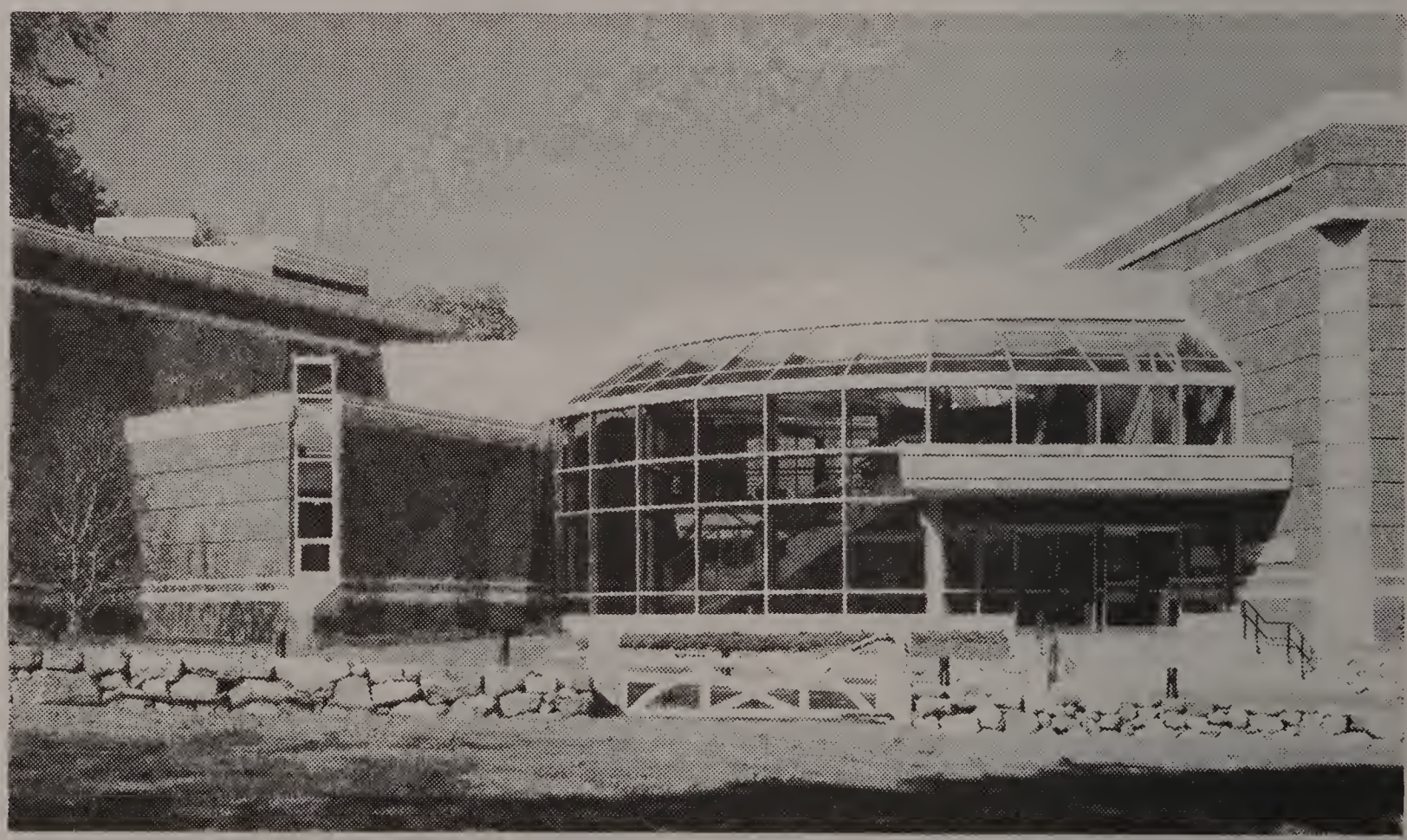
Overall view of the college in the 1990 s.

Four sisters traveled by train from New York to Boston at the invitation of Father Magennis of St. Thomas Parish, Jamaica Plain. These were no ordinary women with no ordinary accomplishments. Within four days of their arrival they had established a school for girls in the basement of St. Thomas Church, with two hundred students seeking enrollment on the first day. Mother Mary Regis, the superior of the little group, embodied their trust in the providence of God. Having set her sights upon the church of Boston, there would be no turning back for her, even in times of hardship. Thus it was that, when the church coffers were meager and could supply no salary for the sisters, Mother Regis used her ingenuity to provide. Like the founding Sisters in France, Mother Regis and her little community turned to the works of their hands by sewing church vestments, garments for the dead, and even baseballs.

There is a sacredness in the number three, and three events in 1884 coincided to bring about a unique result. The American Catholic Bishops had issued a call to expand the Catholic

school system. The Sisters of St. Joseph had outgrown their modest novitiate in Jamaica Plain, and a choice piece of property in Cambridge became available for purchase. Mother Regis's careful saving and planning enabled her to realize the dream of a boarding school for young ladies. Thus was begun Mount Saint Joseph Academy. When a few years later the city of Cambridge, by right of eminent domain, purchased the land from the sisters to create a park at the pond, the Academy moved to its present location in Brighton.

Over the years the Mount has remained true to its mission to the City of Boston and its young women. Its traditions are rich and have served to provide its graduates with an education designed to develop the whole person, an education characterized by excellence and the spirit of gentleness, firmness, peace, and joy. And so it was in keeping with this spirit that Honora Buttimer, a graduate of St. Joseph, dared to dream of a Catholic college for women.



The Fine Arts Center, erected in 1992, to serve art and music lovers of the college, the town of Weston and of surrounding communities.

In February of 1927 the governor of Massachusetts granted a charter for a college to the Sisters of St. Joseph. The original plan was to build the college at Newton, but that was not to be. In June of that year the Morrison estate in Weston was purchased, and Regis College came into being. On September 21, 1927 forty-seven students, thirty-three of whom were residents, gathered together, the first community of learners.

They met a faculty that included several Sisters who had prepared themselves specifically for the challenge of guiding the intellectual pursuits of these forty-seven women. Recognizing the value of modeling lifelong learning, Mother Domitilla had urged the Sisters to earn academic degrees commensurate with the demands of educating post-secondary students. Sister Finbarr Barry earned her doctor's degree in Latin in 1926 and Sister Mildred Curley was awarded a Ph.D. in history in 1927. Before Regis College celebrated its ninth anniversary, a total of eight Sisters on the faculty had earned doctorates.

The Sisters worked and prayed assiduously that by the time of the first commencement there would be an enrollment of two hundred students. How those early pioneers of the college would be pleased to know that Regis College numbers among her graduates more than eleven thousand, two hundred women, of whom one thousand, one hundred eighty-five have been Sisters of St. Joseph.

Mother Domitilla, who was known to "dare great things," predicted that the college would experience success in providing young women with access to a quality education rooted in values. Espousing the quest for academic excellence, instilling an appreciation for the Gospel values of social justice and peace, and exhibiting in their lives a respect for all life on earth, became rules for daily living. The result was that the education which a Regis College degree represents is an education not only for personal excellence but also for the betterment of humankind.

This is a year of jubilee, celebrating seven decades of the life of Regis College. Along Regis's tree-lined path have walked many women who have turned dreams into reality, who have challenged themselves and others to selflessness, and who have left a heritage rich in examples of courage and fulfillment. We find the footprints of over three hundred medical doctors and nurses who have laid the hand of healing on the sick and comfort on the dying. We note too the significant number of lawyers and judges who have pleaded on behalf of the disenfranchised and have meted out both justice and mercy. The path has been trodden by over a thousand educators, teachers, principals, superintendents, professors, who have imparted knowledge, nurtured intellectual curiosity, and sparked enthusiasm for the lifelong pursuit of learning. This path has led to political careers for nearly a hundred women who have advocated for the common good and have contributed to the pluralism of this country. Women continue to walk this path to the future, impelled by the desire to achieve personal fulfillment and heartened by the examples of those who have preceded them.

Each year the college community revisits some sacred moments in its heritage, holding up the mirror of its legacy to see reflected therein the origins, the reality, and the challenges of its ongoing history. Regis College draws courage from the daring of the women who have built its dreams. In the work of today the college responds to the world, its people, and its issues, with new means and modes - with technology undreamed of in 1927. And yet the courage of the young women who set out from France, from St. Louis, from New York, the vision of women who dream of a Catholic college for women - that courage and that vision today play a significant role as Regis continues to explore the uncharted paths that lie ahead. The Regis College community sets its sights on moving forward into the new millennium with renewed confidence that the Regis Heritage makes a difference!

S. Judith Costello

Sister Judith Costello, Associate Professor of Education, is a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston and has been a faculty member at Regis since 1981.

Samuel R. Payson

THE SAMUEL TRAINS OF WESTON

Note: Much of this article is based on information supplied by Frances (Polly) Marshall and Betty Amadon from Weston Historical Commission files. A lot comes from a privately printed book John Trayne and Some of His Descendants by Susan Train Hand (New York: By the author, 1933; reprint). My own interest in the Trains comes from the fact that I am a Train descendant. Be it known that my first name "Samuel" comes from another line of descent.

At three hundred and forty-two Winter Street, Weston, stands one of the oldest houses in Town, the Samuel Train House, built by Samuel Train and his father, John, in 1738. Having visited this property a few years ago, as one of a group of Weston Historical Commissioners, I can attest to its fine condition both inside and out. However, it's not the house itself that I wish to write about but its early occupants, the Samuel Trains, their many services to Weston, their military activity, and their part in the organization of the Baptist Church.

Samuel Train I was born in 1711. He and his wife, Rachel (Allen), had nine children, the oldest son being Samuel, Junior, born in 1745, and married to Deborah Savage in 1771. Samuel III was born in 1785, the fourth of five children. He married Harriet Seaverns.

Samuel Train I was very much involved in Weston affairs being Constable, Selectman, Surveyor of Highways, Collector, Fence Viewer, and Thythigman. It has been recorded that his salary as constable amounted to twenty shillings a year, being paid an extra four shillings three times a year to "Warn Town Meeting." He served as Selectman from 1763 to 1765. He was interested in schools and was a member of the School Committee in 1799 and 1800. He died in 1806 having attained the age of ninety-five. He was a much revered man and a patriarch of the Train family.

Samuel Train II also served the Town well. In 1770, he and his father were largely responsible for securing the vote of the Town for sixty pounds a year to have "five reading and wrighting schools" in the winter season. This shows how much need there was in those days for farming and household chores Spring, Summer, and Fall.

Samuel III was born in 1785. He, too, served Weston well. Town records indicate that he was a Hargrieve, Fence Viewer, Surveyor of Wood, and a member of the South West District School Committee.

All three Samuels were entered into military service. Samuel I served as an "Alarum" man in a company organized to protect Weston from Indian raids. As time went on, the danger from Indians lessened, and this group became known as minute men. They were turned into militia men known as "Train Bands," ready to meet any emergency. According to one source, at the battle of Concord, Samuel I, then sixty-five years of age, and his son, Samuel II, were members of the Weston Company under the command of Lieutenant John Fiske pursuing British soldiers retreating to Charlestown. Another source has Samuel I serving under Major Lamson at the battle of Lexington and also in the Canadian campaign.

Samuel II was one of the few men from Weston to join a force sent to Canada to meet the British under General Burgoyne moving from Quebec to Albany. He fought at the battle of Saratoga. His son, Samuel III, was a militia man in the war of 1812, attaining the rank of Captain in 1811, major in 1813, and Lt. Colonel in 1816.

During the lives of all three Samuels, the Society of Baptists came into being, and they all were active in its formation. In 1772, both Samuel II and his wife, Deborah, had "united into full fellowship with the Congregational Church and they were among the few to join the new Society." Samuel built a tiny meeting house for their use. He and others of his group fought against 'illegal' taxation of the Congregational Church. It was not till 1833 that this new law was repealed in Massachusetts. Samuel Train II became clerk of the Society and Deacon in 1823. He died in 1838 at the age of ninety-three. Samuel Train III was one of the incorporators of the Baptist Church in 1823. He died in 1845 at the age of sixty.

Although this article is entitled "The Samuel Trains of Weston," I would be remis not to mention Charles Train, Samuel III's older brother who, after graduation from Harvard College in 1805, took charge of the congregation in Weston and later in Framingham.

Samuel R. Payson

"Other men catch bears and wolves, but all you ever get me is these little minks!"

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 26, 1997

The following is the text of the Hon. Douglas Henderson's address at the 118th Memorial Day Celebration in Weston. He was introduced by George F. Amadon, chairman of the Memorial Day Committee. Ed.

Friends:

Sometime in 1946 my mother wrote me at my post in Bolivia, to bring me up to date on Weston news. Among other items she reported that my father had attended the funeral of a senior citizen of the town whose forebears had lived in Weston for several generations. Another senior citizen turned to my father, who had not been born here but had lived and worked in Weston for nearly fifty years, and said: "Well, Bill, soon all of us old timers will be gone and you newcomers will be taking over."

So today I, sort of an old timer, am addressing you newcomers. I will try to present a link with Weston's Memorial days of that far off time when I was growing up in Weston.

The Weston Post of the American Legion was a vital link in the chain of Weston's Memorial days. The Post charter was issued in 1919, but was turned in this year, ending nearly eighty years of dedicated service. The Legion members organized many community activities every year. I recall plays given at the Town Hall and strawberry festivals on the common. (My father built the portable dance floor for those occasions.)

Central to the Legion's mission was the Memorial Day observance. Similar in many ways to today's gathering, there were church bells, a band, a parade. A veteran of the war between the states led the parade, in uniform with medals, riding in an open touring car. The Weston schools were fully represented. There were not so many of us then, and attendance was required, the boys in tie and jacket, the girls in their summer dresses. The eighth grade boys carried wooden rifles, but the high school boys marched with real guns, antiquated and heavy.

The memory of the carnage of World War I was still fresh in the minds of many, but we felt sure that the American armed forces had made the world safe for democracy. Memorial Day was as much a celebration as an occasion for somber thoughts. The only real doleful notes were the band's rendition of the Dead March from Saul, played in slow time as we toiled up the hill in Linwood

Cemetery. Otherwise Memorial Day remains for me a time of sunshine and flowers, of talk and laughter.

The years passed, and the American people turned to the crises of the great depression. Memorial Day was still observed, but its meaning was obscured by pressing domestic problems. I was reminded of that post-World War I era when the Weston Post of the American Legion recently turned their flag over to the town, and their records to the Weston Historical Society for safekeeping. It is my fervent hope that someone will write a history of the Weston Post. Its history is an integral part of Weston history.

I looked in vain, in the pages of biographies bound in the Post records, for accounts of battle, although many of the men, including my father, had seen front line duty. Several of the accounts did, however, relate to November 11, 1918, Armistice Day, and these brief notes which I have taken from those pages, set the scene:

"I shall never forget that last night trip after it was all over. Lights on the trucks and cars, fires gleaming on the hillsides and in woods. Cannon silent, no machine gun fire, no crack of rifle. An overpowering silence, even the ground had ceased to tremble."

"The most vivid of my many recollections is of that cold night of November 13, 1918 when the war prisoners came back from Germany, and the joy of giving ourselves over to administer to the wants of those who had known such hardship and such sorrow."

The Legion link is gone now, yet we must not forget. But how to remember in the dailiness of our lives?

Perhaps we should re-discover our monuments and put them in some public place where they may be seen as we go about our daily travels. If every day we had the opportunity to see the words which I have taken from these monuments, our citizens would come to know something of the sacrifice made by those who came before us.

"This Memorial is erected by the town of Weston in grateful remembrance of the brave men who gave their lives in the holy cause of freedom."

"Honor Roll of the citizens of the town of Weston who served in the uniformed forces of the Army and Navy in the World War. This tablet was erected in accordance with the vote of the town of Weston March 28, 1921."

"The town of Weston holds in proud and living memory - there follow 21 names - who gave their lives in World War II."

"Honor Roll of citizens of the town of Weston. This tablet was dedicated December 1, 1949."

You may search out these monuments. I had to push aside a trash barrel to read one of them and climb on a chair to read others. But it will never be enough to search out and read. Memorial Day is not about speeches, and music, and flowers, and parades. It is about war, and the aftermath of war. It is about remembering. We may well again, in our nation's interest, have to commit our armed forces to battle. But Memorial Day is here to remind us that after the battle we will have to be, in Abraham Lincoln's words, "dedicated to the work they nobly advanced."

Memorial Day bids us to remember.

MEMORIES AT A MILESTONE

Glen Hutcheson

As I just graduated from high school, I thought I would take a summer completely off from any sort of academic work before forging ahead into the vaster world of college and , no doubt, having to study much harder. Therefore, I've been working at Land's Sake Organic Farm since graduation, writing only brief, imaginatively spelled e-mails to friends and reading only trashy science fiction. However, a few weeks ago I received an assignment to write this particular article, which I immediately forgot about, was reminded of several times by my conscientious and well-organized mother, and put off until the last minute. My excuse for procrastinating was that I was thinking of what to write about, and to my own surprise, I actually *did* spend some time considering that dilemma.

I entertained several ideas for subjects, including frisbee games on the Green, the renovation of the High School, and Weston Forest and Trail Paths I have Known and Loved, but eventually settled upon writing about the farm. Having come to this decision, I began to look forward to the project somewhat, Land's Sake being a pleasant place to work and to write about. Also, I had plenty of recent experiences and memories to draw upon. Now that I think about it, some memories aren't that recent (for me at a few months under 18, that is).

I commenced farm work six or seven years ago as a lowly Middle School morning laborer, working (if you could call it that) from eight to twelve every morning - well, most mornings, anyway, other than weekends and days when I didn't want to go - for $2.50 an hour. Back then Land's Sake and Greenpower were two separate farms, Greenpower being located on Merriam Street, with a field on Concord Road as well, and Land's Sake being across from the Case estate where it is today. I worked at Greenpower then and I hated it. Well, maybe not hated... the weeding was horrible, and I did not like picking zucchini because it was prickly, and it was hot and dry and didn't have a bathroom (unless you counted "lavatrees") - but the people were fun, and I was earning a bit of money. I remember playing volleyball during our breaks, which were supposed to be fifteen minutes long but usually ended up lasting somewhat longer. My older brother Andy would play on a team called "The Tipsy Transvestite Trio" with Jake Rudnitzky (I'm certain that is misspelled) and Hanon Rosenthal (he thought up the name). No one was tipsy that I recall, nor do I remember any transvestites, but they were a great volleyball team.

Another time we had a huge thunderstorm in the early morning, and they guy in charge at that time, Steve Miller (he wasn't the one with the band), decided to set up a game of eggplant football when it stopped. We gathered in a recently tilled field, which after the storm was all shin-deep, loose, gooey mud. The largest eggplant available was stripped of its stem (they're prickly, too) and we commenced, forgetting about work for the rest of the morning. We had to replace the eggplant a few times.

I continued working for the next few summers, getting a little taller and maybe a little tougher, and beginning to enjoy the farm for the work itself and not merely the money and camaraderie. Weeding beets for four hours straight is not exactly exciting, but it is very peaceful and relaxing. My friends began getting jobs in grocery stores and their parents'

offices and would frequently point out that I could earn significantly more money were I to follow their example, but by that time I could not imagine working inside during the summer. The farm was a tradition.

The summer before my freshman year in high school (I think - I'm horrible with dates; I can barely remember all of my siblings' birthdays) Land's Sake and Greenpower got mooshed, or merged. I was kind of hazy on the details, but as I understood it, I was now working on Land's Sake Farm in the Greenpower Program for Middle School kids, and I had to go to Wellesley Street instead of the Merriam Street fields in the morning. To me it did not make much difference. Throughout these years the management had switchecd around a bit; I started out with Steve Miller being the guy-in-charge, and then it was Tom Gumbart, and then John Clasby (with Tom as guy-in-charge over John) and so on. I ended up with at least three or four bosses, including Tom. They were all nice.

Once I was in High School, I graduated from working four hours a day to working eight hours a day, a prospect which I greeted with somewhat muted enthusiasm at first, but grew used to; being paid more than $2.50 an hour helped. In the morning I would try to keep my successors, the next generation of Middle Schoolers, working, a task accomplished by a combination of bribery, threats, shouting, and in some cases physical restraint, and in the afternoon I would work with the rest of the staff on weeding projects or trail work. The high points were weekly field trips with the kids on some of which I was taken along as a chaperone; shipping produce to shelters and food pantries, which still makes me feel good; and conversing and sometimes singing with fellow supervisors and young charges. Oh, and driving the ATV (All Terrain Vehicle); we use it for dragging loads of squash from the field to the stand.

What I did not realize for some time was how much I was learning. I know when and where and why to plant a cover crop, and what plants are good for that; I know how far apart beets and carrots should be so that they grow well; I know what kinds of plants Japanese beetles like, and what to do about them; I know how to sucker tomato plants, and which types to sucker; I even know what an Eastern Kingbird looks like (Tom is an ornithologist). Granted, little of this helped me on the SAT's, but who needs them anyway?

I'm writing this after another eight-hour day of yelling, coaxing, picking, weeding, and having fun. I have another week and a half before I head off to college; one of my friends from the farm is leaving tomorrow, and others are taking a year off from school to go to New Zealand or Hawaii or Australia (or all three!), maybe to work on other organic farms. I'm going to savor the last few days this year, and maybe next summer I'll decide to branch out and stop working at Land's Sake - maybe *I'll* be in New Zealand - but I do not think I'm ever going to regret staying on the farm for these years.

Glen Hutcheson

Glen Hutcheson is a Weston native and son of two Weston natives, now attending Haverford College in Pennsylvania. He enjoys backpacking, classical guitar and ultimate frisbee, among other things; this is how he described himself. Editor's addition: he is also a National Honor Society member, National Merit Scholarship finalist, with awards in Spanish, art and biology. He is also a voracious reader (no TV in his home!) with an inborn intellectual curiosity.

A IS FOR AGING

A is for aging that is not enraging
as seasoned citizens continue saging
empowered by verses of Mother Ruth's
in alphabet form like Mother Goose.

This alphabet of tales of gerontology
will teach about avoiding melancholy
so you can celebrate your later years
with cheers and birthdays without tears
or downing excessive gin and many beers
gleaned from her solid deep research
plus her own seventy year old perch.

If you follow Mother Ruth's advice
your ageing will be rather nice
because you will become courageous
wise, witty and maybe outrageous.
It can be fun to turn the page
from naive youth to aging sage.

Dr. Ruth Harriet Jacobs is a sociologist specializing in gerontology, affiliated with Wellesley and Regis College, and frequent contributor to The Senior Times. The above poem is reprinted here with her kind permission.

LITTLE TOWN

I like to live in a little town
Where the trees meet across the street,
Where you wave your hand and say "hello"
To everyone you meet.

I like to stand for a moment
Outside the grocery store
And listen to the friendly gossip of
The folks who live next door.

For life is interwoven
With the friends we learn to know,
And we hear their joys and sorrows
As we daily come and go.

So I like to live in Weston,
I care no more to roam,
And my house in Merriam Village
Is more than a house - it is home.

Adapted by Jo and Ed French
from anonymous source

THE 1997 ANNUAL CHARTER DINNER:
OUT TO NORUMBEGA

I am delighted to report, that once again the Weston Historical Society's lecture, this time at the annual charter dinner, was a great success. It took place on Wednesday, May 7, 1997 at the First Parish Church. Over sixty people came to the feast and to listen to a lively speaker about an interesting topic that brought back many fond memories for old timers and opened eyes of the younger folk in the audience.

"Out to Norumbega" was presented with fascinating slides by Bob Pollack, who is most likely the most knowledgeable chronicler these days about the old glory that once was Norumbega. He is quite a raconteur, and his slides could not have been more faithful to the good ol' days on Weston's border. Bob Pollack grew up in Auburndale and as a boy worked at Norumbega Park and also in the Riverside Recreation area. His popular lecture is the fruit of years of research plus his own recollections.

Much of the story we heard is contained in the booklet Historic Auburndale, edited by Bill Saunders and available for $5 at the Gift Shop at the Riverside Recreation Grounds on the Charles River (the brown house just before you get to the Marriott coming from Weston on Route 30), which is quite a canoe center still.

It is too bad that this fabulous entertainment center had to close. It lasted from 1897 to 1963, featuring canoes, merry-go-round, swings, concerts, picnic grounds, restaurant, and the largest zoo in New England. Special trains brought out visitors from Boston, to enjoy the electric fountains, penny arcade and vaudeville theatre. The 15c. round-trip price included admission to the park. The song "Down by the Riverside" was inspired by the recreation area. Among the many sensational offerings was the first and most likely only motion picture drive-in for canoes, where many a local girl received her first kiss!

Luminaries from Buffalo Bill Cody to Olympic swimmer champion Gertrude Ederle were featured at various times. The place was enriched in 1927 when Boston University purchased 24 acres on the Weston side for its Nickerson Filed, where football, baseball, soccer, track, and tennis were practiced.

The Totem Pole Ballroom was an additional attraction, with bands like those of Artie Shaw, Harry James, Benny Goodman, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsay. Those were the days!

But times changed, and for various reasons this formerly extraordinary park that had offered entertainment for young and old succumbed to the changing tastes of the times. It closed on Labor Day 1963, and the ballroom the following February. Three fires of suspicious origin destroyed several buildings shortly thereafter.

Sic transit gloria mundi. Yet the history of the Norumbega Park and the Riverside Recreation area will live in the bitter-sweet memories not only of its participants but of those who hear about them only as a part of local history.

* * *

Another event commemorating the 100th anniversary of Norumbega was a canoe regatta on Sunday, June 8th, with picnicking for landlubbers. Our president and some members participated in these festivities.

As we go to press, preparations are being made for Saturday, September 27, 1997 for more fun and games at Riverside Park from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the following day for local historian Robert Pollack's slide lecture on the history of Riverside at Lasell College in Auburndale, at 6:30 p.m., both to be welcoming the public free of charge. For the record, you can reach Mr. Pollack at 781-762-6557.

Vera Laska

* * *

JUST FOR THE RECORD

According to the Boston Globe (6/19/97, pp. 1 & 23), the following book holdings were recorded:

New York Public Library	18.3 million
Library of Congress	16.5 million
Boston Public Library	6.5 million

According to their librarians, Weston libraries hold the following number of books:

Weston Public Library	80,932
Weston High School Library	c.12,000
Regis College Library	125,816

* * *

Joseph P. Sheehan, Jr.

INTRODUCING JOSEPH P. SHEEHAN, JR.

Joe Sheehan is a life long Weston resident, who resides in the Sheehan family home at 484 Concord Road. This home, built in 1891, has been in the family since that time. The Sheehans' first home was on Wellesley Street, on land now owned by Regis College. They had a small meat packing business, and their slaughter house is marked on the 1870 map of Weston. They eventually needed more land and they sold that property to the Demmon family and moved to Concord Road. Today there are two homes on the original land, and his parents still live at 490 Concord Road.

Joe was educated in Weston Schools, and one of his favorite teachers was Lee Marsh, today the president of the Weston Historical Society. He graduated from Weston High School in 1973, and Villanova University in 1977. He did graduate work at the Washington Theological Union in preparation for priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church. He was a member of the Order of Saint Augustine for a number of years. He left the Order and was married in 1985 to Ruth Conroy, of Brookline. Today he works as the Coordinator of International Admission at Merrimack College and does extensive travel in the Far East. He has two children, Michael, age 10, and Julia age 6, both of whom attend the Weston schools. Joe ran for School Committee two years ago, losing by one vote in that election. He is active on a number of boards in Weston and at St. Julia Church.

OPEN HOUSE AND BOAT RIDE

The Museum of the Weston Historical Society held its annual OPEN HOUSE on Saturday, May 17, 1997 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. within the general framework of the Weston "Spring Fling." A large number of visitors dropped in and showed increasing interest in the various exhibits. We thank our docents Mrs. Deborah Ecker and Meredith Lightbown for their generous help.

We were again surrounded by flowers, thanks to the grand sale of flowers by the Country Garden Club of Weston. No wonder that the program was also referred to as "Weston in Bloom!"

METCO also celebrated its 30th anniversary in Weston with the St. Mary's Heavenly Fire steel band performance on the town green. There was food, arts & crafts, music, displays and storytelling, with special participation of many of the town businesses, from Auntie's Green Store to Wilkin's Art Consulting. All in all, a great time was had by all including the visitors to the Scouting exhibit at the Josiah Smith Tavern. Photos are on file in the Museum album!

A most pleasant social activity of the Society was the BOAT RIDE on the Charles, arranged by our president Lee Marsh for Monday evening, June 30th, 1997, that took us into the nooks and cranies of the river from the starting point at the Marriott hotel. About twenty participants enjoyed the sights and each other's company.

Vera Laska

WESTON HISTORY - Think Christmas!

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.

All three books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 1998 Volume XXIX, No. 1

A memento of a pleasant Weston Sunday afternoon: Mr. & Mrs. Sam Payson, Doug Henderson and Jacques Wajsfelder in front of the Town Hall during the October 5, 1997 walk in the town's center, with Henderson as narrator. Photo by Andrew J. Laska

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF WESTON ON ITS 300TH ANNIVERSARY — 1698-1998

Please refer to our commemorative article on the history of the First Parish Church, which appeared as a lead article in the Spring, 1997 issue of the BULLETIN from the capable pen of Mary Maynard, author of five books and Chair of the First Parish Historian's Committee.

THE TOWN COMMON
THROUGH THE CENTURIES

This is an essay about a place, the Town Common, or Meeting House Common, as it once was called. History is apart of it, and landmark dates are duly noted. Buildings are a part of it, as elements in its evolution. The Boston Post Road is at its heart. People used to congregate here and made it a vibrant element of life in Weston.

Stand with me today on the cobblestones surrounding the old watering trough. How old? I can only conjecture that it was part of a municipal water system, started by a group of Weston citizens sometime in the 1890s. The Weston Water Company and the Weston Electric Company are stories waiting to be told.

In the year 1600 we would be standing in a grove of hardwood trees—oak, elm, chestnut, sycamore. The land sloped away from this ridge, as it does today. Meandering streams flowed eastward at the foot of the slope on either side, the remnants of glacial outwashes.

The woodland Indians, sadly diminished in number by diseases caught from European fisherman who plied the offshore waters, made their camps along the Charles and Sudbury Rivers. Some of our roads today follow old Indian trails.

The first organized European settlements in this area were established in 1634 as the Farmers' Precinct of Watertown. Boundaries were quickly established along the lines of present day Weston, with the exception of the Town of Lincoln, which broke off from Weston in 1752.

Farm and forest products moving to the markets in Watertown and Boston soon wore well established, albeit rutted and muddy thoroughfares. Droves of farm animals, wagons laden with hay and grain, travellers on foot and horseback made this the Great Road, the King's Highway, and finally the Boston Post Road.

The first official post rider passed through here on his way from New York to Boston, a two week journey in the winter of 1673. He was the pioneer of a regular service between New York and Boston, a service which was replaced by stage coaches in 1740. This stage coach service gave rise to taverns along the route. The Josiah Smith Tavern, built in 1765, was a breakfast stop for travellers who had been picked up in Boston at about four o'clock in the morning.

The first settlers were members of the Congregational Church in Watertown. Church service on the Sabbath was required of all members in good standing in the church. Thus the residents of the Farmers' Precinct made a weekly journey to Watertown. Both for convenience and protection the trip was made in convoy. The Post Road was equidistant from the north and south sides of the Precinct, and a meeting place was quickly established here. However, the day-long absence from their crops and animals imposed a severe hardship on these farmers, and by 1690 they had begun to agitate for a separate precinct and church. A shelter or meeting house was built in 1698 at this already established meeting place, and a minister was called to serve here several years before final authorization was granted. It was not until 1712 by the old (Julian) calendar, 1713 by today's calendar, that the General Court in Boston legalized the Town of Weston. A new church was thereafter built near the old site in 1722.

The citizens of Weston were at that time almost entirely members of the First Parish. Church and state were intermingled, with the government of the Parish carried out by wardens elected by adult males in good standing. An annual meeting, to discuss and vote on articles in a published warrant, was led by a moderator, elected by adult males of the congregation. All male citizens of the Town, whether church members or not, had to pay an annual tax, or tithe, to the church. This treasury was not only for the maintenance of the church and clergy, but also to pay for town services including upkeep of roads. Poor road upkeep led Lincoln to secede in 1752.

Alarm bands (militia) had been formed in most of the communities of the colony soon after its establishment. These bands were drilled in military skills, at first to ward off possible Indian attacks, but soon to take part in the French and Indian War, 1754-1763. It was a well prepared group of about one hundred Weston farmers under the command of major Samual Lamson which, on the morning of April 19, 1775, fell into formation in the meeting place and marched off to join Minutemen from neighboring towns as they harassed the British regulars in their retreat from Concord.

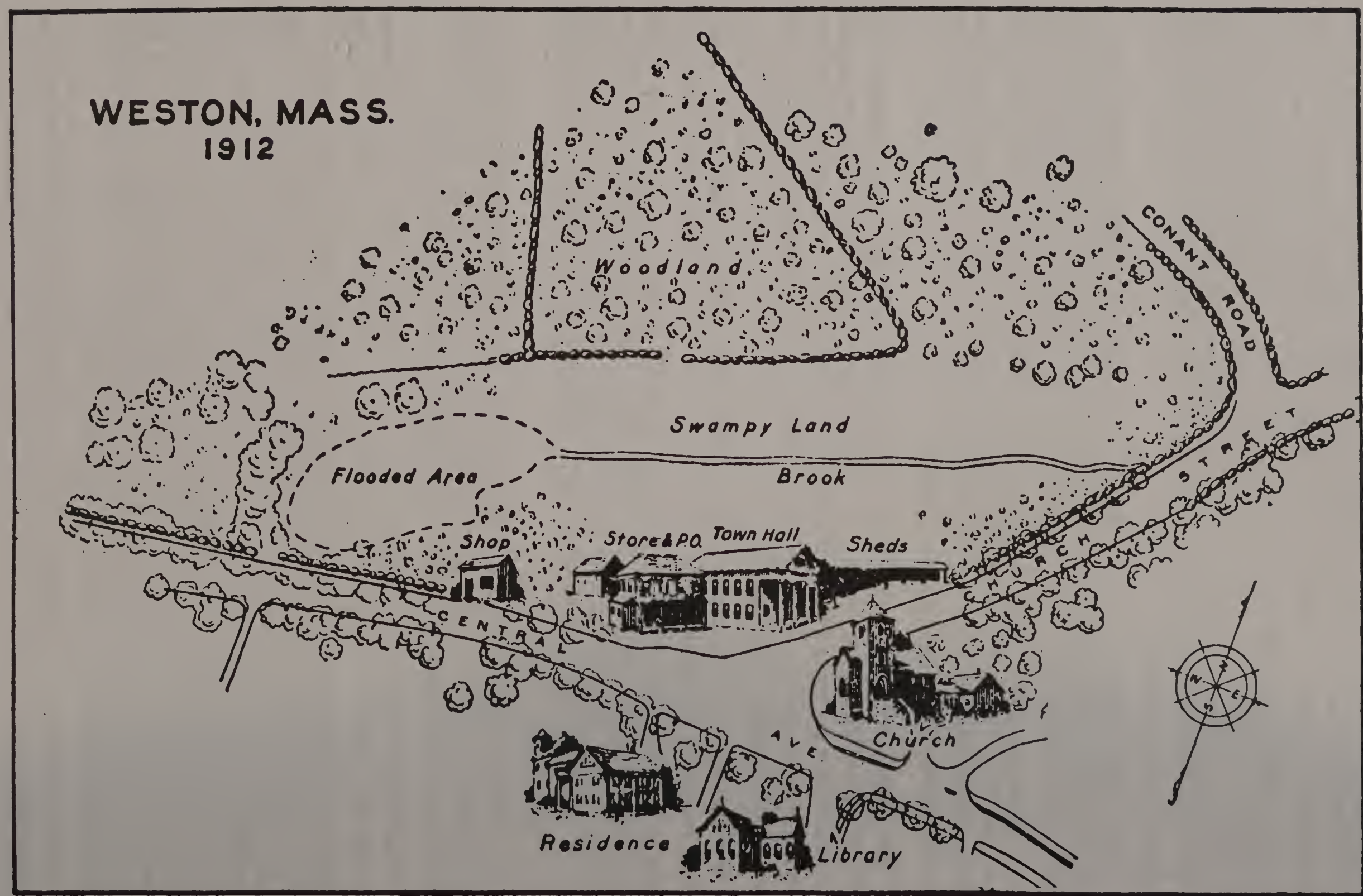
The Lamson home was located near today's Lamson Park next to the Common. The Lamson family had a significant role in Weston, as farmers, military men, historians and proprietors of a general store and millinery shop a short distance to the west from the First Parish Church along the Boston Post Road. The store was later bought by Charles Merriam, and then by George W. Cutting, Senior.

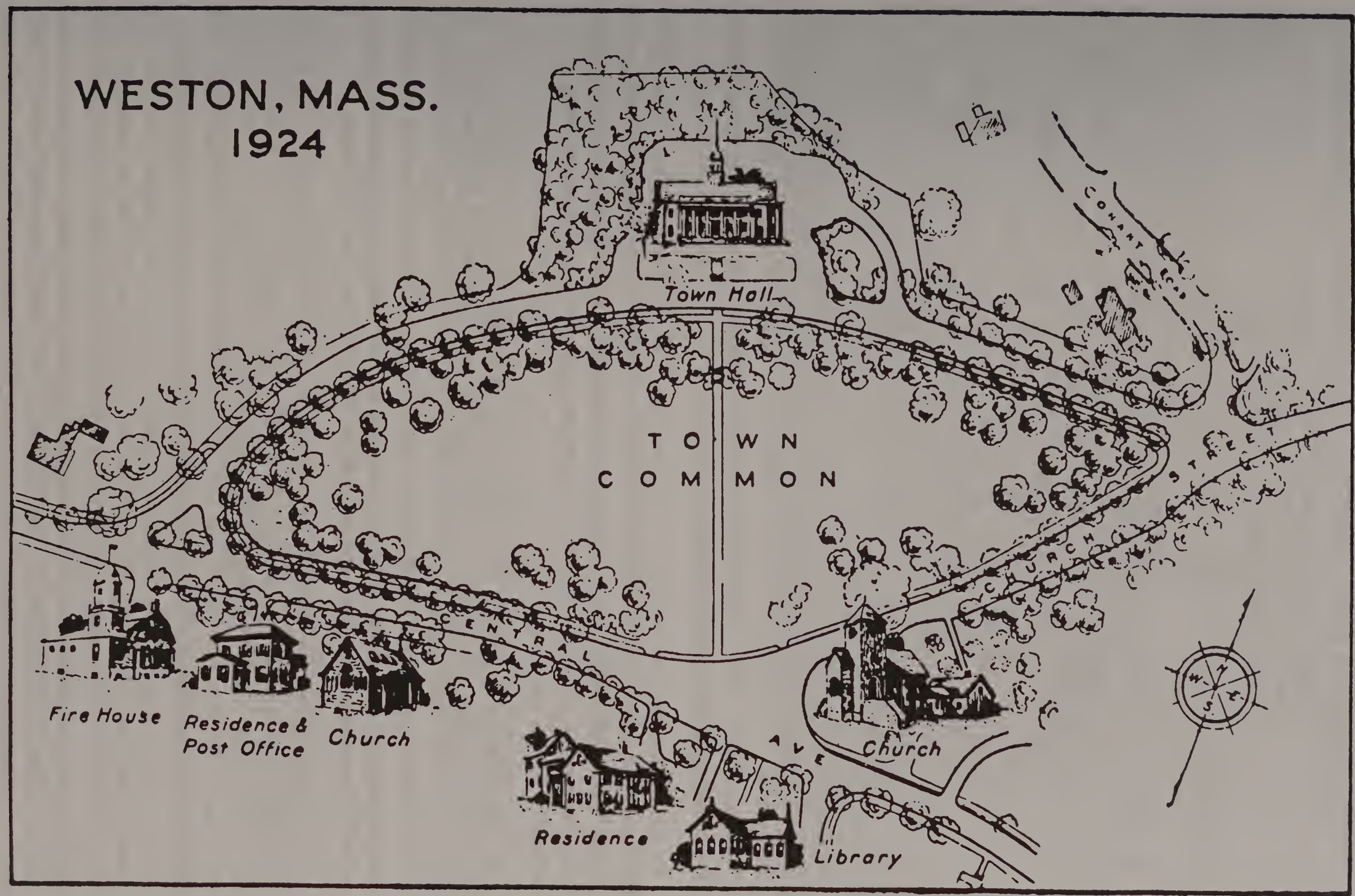
The legal separation of church and state was slow in coming to New England, finally being enacted in Massachusetts in 1833. Not until 1847 was a Town Hall erected on the Boston Post Road adjacent to Cutting's Store. This Hall was used not only for town offices, but, at one time and another, for school rooms, a library, and arsenal (rifles were stored here during the Civil War), and many other civic activities. The basement housed fire apparatus for the volunteer fire department. The horses were kept in a livery stable a few hundred yards away on Church Street.

By 1840, railroads had begun to replace the stage coach, and the taverns, including the Josiah Smith Tavern, declined in importance. It should be noted that this Tavern had been used for town meetings after 1833 and until 1847 when the Town Hall was built.

The evolution of the Town Common into the center of life in Weston had begun when church goers gathered here to journey to Watertown, following the route laid down by farmers and travellers on foot and horseback. The building of the First Parish Church, one of four buildings to be erected on or near this site, brought Weston families here. The stage coach travellers, interrupting their east or west journeys to patronize the Smith Tavern, brought news from beyond the Weston limits, as well as patronage for local shops. The railroad, with its station at the Weston depot replaced the stage coach as a source of information and income. Cutting's Store, with its post office behind the front window, brought trade into this area. The Town Hall, with its offices, small library, school rooms, and fire station, as well as its large hall, used for dances and social occasions, teemed with activity. The Public Library, built in 1899, put the final block in place.

The Weston Town Common had become, by custom and long usage, the functional civic center of Weston.


WESTON, MASS.
1912
Woodland
CONANT ROAD
Swampy Land
Flooded Area
Brook
CHURCH STREET
Shop
Store & P.O.
Town Hall
Sheds
CENTRAL AVE.
Church
Residence
Library


WESTON, MASS.
1924
Town Hall
TOWN
COMMON
CONANT ROAD
CHURCH STREET
CENTRAL AVE
Fire House
Residence &
Post Office
Church
Residence
Library
Church

The Sunday Herald of Boston, dated May 11, 1902, had the following headlines:

Weston has become the Lenox of the East
One Town Without a Trolley Line
Sylvan Retreat of Busy Boston Men

The headlines were followed by pictures of ten mansions. The accompanying text told of four additional edifices.[1]

Agriculture and small industry which had supplied the livelihood for most of Weston's families for nearly two centuries were diminishing in importance. Railroads and later the telephone made it possible to live in Weston and earn an income elsewhere, principally in Boston. Starting with the advent of rail transportation, prosperous professionals and businessmen had moved their households from Boston to Weston in the summer months to escape the crowded streets and sweltering heat. By the time of the headlines noted above, a number of them had acquired large estates on which they built homes deserving the name of mansions. These homes were usually sited well back from the streets, with sweeping lawns and careful plantings to protect the privacy of these "sylvan retreats" while still allowing glimpses of the splendid buildings.

The design and maintenance of these estates required professional assistance, as well as a substantial support staff. The art and science of landscaping in the United States begins with Frederick Law Olmsted, who had established a home and office in Brookline in the 1880s. A number of these "Busy Boston Men," now living in Weston, looked to Olmsted and his staff for professional landscaping services.

In the preparation and execution of the celebration of the town's 200th anniversary in 1913, a civic parade created a modernized Weston. It had become evident to townspeople that the Town Hall, built in 1847, would require extensive and expensive repairs. Furthermore, the marshy land behind the building was unsightly and a breeding ground for mosquitos.

A Town Meeting in March, 1911 appointed a Town Improvement Committee to work with the Town Parks Commission "to consider the improvement and development of the centre [sic] of the town and the securing of proper sites for Town buildings."[2] The members of the Committee and of the Commission, some of whom had used the services of Olmsted or one of his assistants, Arthur Shurtleff, who had by that time established his won business, naturally turned to a landscape professional, i.e., Shurtleff, for plans and advice.

The Olmsted school was based on the principle of using the natural terrain of the site and the planting of native shrubs, ground covers and vines.[3] Shurtleff's 1912 submission laid out a bow shaped street beginning at the Boston Post Road on the west, along the high ground above the marsh, and ending at the junction of Church Street and Conant Road. This plan showed a fire station at the west end of the Town House Road, the new Town Hall on a small rise at the center of the arc and building sites on either side of the Town Hall. The marshy stream was to be channeled underground, and a greensward planted, sweeping up to the Post Road and to the new road. The use of native trees, particularly a large graceful elm already in place, and shrubs would break up the monotony of the stretch of grass and allow glimpses of the Town Hall from the Post Road. Shurtleff's second submission, in 1913, kept these basic elements, but omitted the building sites. The fire station was built in 1913 on its present site. Both plans provided for the removal not only of the original Town Hall, but also of Cutting's Store and the little shop beside the store, by that time a harness shop.[4]

HORACE S. SEAR'S RESIDENCE, WESTON, MASS.

Shurtleff's plan consistently envisaged the Town Common, or Green, as a separate entity, a Town Common, not a public park. No war memorials, no bandstands, no playing fields.

George Cutting's home, at the corner of the Boston Post Road and School Street, had already been moved to Number 36 Church Street, providing the site for the Public Library, built in 1899. Now his store, including the post office and hitching rail, was moved across the Post Road, next to the new fire station. Tullis' harness shop was moved about one hundred yards west along the Post Road and ended its separate existence as the nucleus of the Weston Center Building. When Cutting's Store closed in 1926, the post office was moved first to the Coburn Block, built in 1895, and then to its present location on Colpitts Road.

Olmsted's belief that pastoral scenery would relieve stress and promote a sense of tranquility[5] is embodied in the present Town Common. It puts a skillfully landscaped and visually attractive distance between the center of Weston's administration and the traffic and business on the Post Road. The Town Hall, in addition to housing the Town's offices and committees, serves occasionally as the site of townwide gatherings, e.g., the High School graduations, Memorial Day observances or theatrical performances.

The watering trough still sits at the center of the old Town Common, but only memories remain of the vibrant civic life which found its focus here.

[1] This page, framed, hangs in the Weston Historical Museum.

[2, 3, 4, 5] A more detailed story about the new Town Hall and Common is to be found in a pamphlet "Weston Town Common – A History" by Nancy A. Fleming, printed by the Weston Garden Club on the occasion of its 50th anniversary in 1941.

Douglas Henderson

THE GIRL WASHINGTON KISSED

There is a picture of a lady with an expression of resignation on her face hanging on the wall of the Weston Historical Museum. It is a daguerreotype copy, representing Hannah Gowen of Weston. The lady intrigued me sufficiently to delve into her story and ferret out the reason why she inhabits the eminent space of our museum.

Hannah Gowen's claim to fame dates back to our Revolutionary times and the early years of our republic. In 1789 President George Washington undertook a tour of New England that he did not see since the start of the Revolutionary War. On October 23rd of that year, his party, including his companions Tobias Lear and Major Jackson and six servants, stayed overnight at the Flag Tavern in Weston. The tavern keeper took care of the carriage and its four horses, as well as the horses of the servants; the party was wined and dined at the Tavern (which burned down on November 6, 1902).

The following morning, the 24th of October, 1789, Colonel Thomas Marshall officially welcomed President Washington to Weston. Then the notables of the town were presented to him, together with local veterans of the war who served under Washington. It was at this time that Washington kissed a young teenager, Hannah Gowen, who then cherished the moment during the rest of her long life.

Hannah Gowen unfortunately did not keep a diary, and little is known about her. We do know that she died on May 23, 1870 at the ripe age of 95 years and 8 months. She is buried in the Old Burying Ground on Weston's Boston Post Road. The story goes that there was a new hearse in town at that time, and some Westonites who knew Hannah Gowen commented: "Was it not just like Hannah Gowen to be the first one to ride in it!"

There is a sentimental aftermath to this story. To commemorate the event of Washington's visit and of the memorable kiss to Hannah Gowen, a tree was planted. It survived until 1923, when it was blown down by strong winds. It lay on the ground till 1924 when it was cut up; one cross section of it is also in the Weston Historical Museum. This tree had lived

near Hannah Gowen's house on Highland Street. Not far was the Marshall house; rumors have it that on his 1789 visit, Washington actually stayed with the Marshalls, while his retinue spent the night at the Flag Tavern. The Marshall house was originally a loyalist property, confiscated and sold to the Marshall family. Eventually it was owned by the Paine family, moved to Church Street, and sold to the Fiske family.

Behind the Gowen house was–and is–Sanderson Hill, where Jonas Sanderson kept the beacon light during the Revolutionary war, a link in a chain of signals.

The last word about Hannah Gowen: allegedly she was fond of skunks and kept some as pets inside her house. It might have been some of their descendants who generations later took up residence in the hollow of the famous Hannah Gowen tree while it was lying on the ground.

Vera Laska

Reprinted from the Town Crier, 1/8/98, p.9.

RECREATION ON THE MELONE HOMESTEAD, WESTON, 1940s.

Recently I attended a Recreation Commission Forum and subsequent Special Town Meeting on December 9, 1997, which approved the spending of $95,000 to design a new recreation building. It was interesting to compare what the town had available for organized recreation in the 1930s and 1940s at the Riverside with what is being proposed and afforded now in the 1990s.

After having heard the wonderful slide presentation at the Weston Historical Society on December 4, 1997 by my friend and local historian Bob Pollock about that earliest recreation center known as Riverside "Rec" in Weston, I decided to answer Bob's question as to why I had never gone to this fantastic area. The reason was that I lived on a farm on the other side of the town and rarely ventured out of my neighborhood of Crescent Street. Here we had our own recreational area. My biggest venture out of my neighborhood in my elementary school days was to take the school bus to my friend's house on Summer Street, which was still within walking distance from my house.

* * *

I feel very fortunate to have had the privilege to have grown up on Weston at the Melone homestead, the place of my birth, on a 62 acre farm of the Sears Estate, with fields, open space and forest. Here I and my siblings and neighbors had freedom to recreate. I loved nature, so I was outdoors during most daylight hours, when not at school or doing chores, and would have to be called home for supper. Our form of recreation was literally "re-creating." In winter the ponds and swamps of Three Mile Brook were our skating areas for pickup hockey with me wearing hand-me-down brother's hockey skates. I loved the interaction, though, at times, being the youngest skater, I felt I was the puck. We'd play hide and seek in and among the trees in the swamp, or attempt figures, or play "come over."

Being the only girl of our age of 8 to 12 years in the neighborhood, I joined my brothers and friends with many re-creating times. One such summer project that my brother Danny,

Haying at the Melone farm: friends Nick Giampetro (with pitchfork), Nick Foskini and Sears chauffeur's daughter Jeanette Comeau helping Joseph Melone, who is leading his team of horses Charlie and Lightning. In the lower left corner is Melone's black labrador dog Peter. Photo from the 1930s.

Bo Perry and I did was to build a tree house and an airplane which was to fly across the tomato field from the big maple tree to the big cedar tree, a good 500 yards spread. We got hold of some old cable line left over from the Boston and Maine railway, pulled as taut as we could, and proceed to traverse the field holding the cable, at about our heads' level. It was exciting to complete the wooden airplane made of a box with board wings. The tree house of old scrapwood had been completed weeks before. When the christening and first flight was to take place, consensus was the smallest of us should pilot the plane. I was delegated. I jumped into the plane from the platform of the tree house, and my brother Danny got the plane to move on the cable. Low and behold, the plane and I went down the cable, which, with my weight, went right down into the center of the ripening tomatoes! So much for sauce! Needless to say, we were not able to use the cabled airplane again.

We loved to climb trees, we did so often, and we had our favorites. The maples had the nicest angles, and it seemed we could climb higher in them. One day our tree climbing fun turned into disaster, though my memory of it is not so much of pain as of the care I received. One of the branches gave way, I slid down the trunk, was impaled, then hit the ground, hard. It was Dr. Van Nuys who advised my mother about the care I would need at home. She made the most wonderful flaxseed poultices, and to this day when I smell flaxseed, I feel comfort. I was carried by my brothers for two weeks; it was a unique form of transport: they would hand me over their heads one to another, as I was held horizontally as a log, and that made it fun for me.

Another summer, even though we swam at the old Town Pool at the ByPass, we three decided to begin the construction of a swimming pool of our own in an area between the swamp and the chicken coop, not only a sunny spot, but also with softer soil. We shoveled for what seemed like weeks, digging up an area of about 4x4 yards. We finally gave up, deciding that not only was it too much work, but there were too many mosquitoes.

The Melone homestead at 27 Crescent Street.

In the winters, our neighbors, the Perrys, had nice hills for sledding and skiing, with their leather bear-claw strap skis we all shared. We had so much fun and before we went home, Mrs. Perry would serve us hot cocoa and her delicious cookies. At one point, we decided to begin a ski club which included Bo Perry, my brother Danny and me. Danny was president, Bo was treasurer, and I was secretary. Rules and regulations were drawn up, and criteria for membership and advancement were drafted. The most important membership criterion was that the member had to have the ability to ski down between the trees on the Perry slope, not just down the open broad slope. We were in a dilemma because the secretary could not meet this criterion for membership, even after many tries and many contacts with trees. That criterion had to be waived for the secretary to remain secretary.

On the farm we had cows, pigs, chickens, goats, a team of horses and a pony named Polly, who would pull the little red pung (sleigh). One day my brother Tony took the reins, and six of us piled into the pung, with my younger sister Celia seated on my older sister Josie's lap. We headed up the old road from the house, up the hill to the back field in what seemed like at least 2-3 feet of snow, with Polly pulling and us gliding along behind her. I remember it being so wonderful, especially when we began our descent toward the back field. As we came out of the wooded section of the old road with the field in view, Polly headed to the right, the rung of the pung went over a rock, and we all tipped out into the snow. I remember Tony having good control of the situation, and Josie picking up toddler Celia, digging her out of the deep snow. We all laughed, as no one was hurt, and this was all part of the adventure and excitement of the trip.

There were many episodes around the horses. One summer day we were playing in the hay loft of our huge barn, which had a chute where you pushed hay down from the loft for the horses, cows, and goats below. We would ride the chute down to the pile of hay. Even though it was work, we younger siblings would consider it fun to stomp the hay down as it

was being pitched to the loft by my father, his friends, and my brothers during the hay harvesting times. One day when coming out of the barn, I heard shouting. Tony was riding the tip cart being drawn by Charlie and Lightning, our team of work horses. Tony looked like Ben Hur driving his chariot, standing erect. Every so often Lightning would go wild, and this was one of those days. I looked on in horror to see Tony do a back flip off the tip cart, the reins in the air, and the horses pulling in opposite directions, rearing and bucking. My shear fright brought me behind the nearest big maple tree, and that was exactly where the horses finally came to a stop, crashing into the very same tree! I ran to the house and looked back to see Tony again, taking control of the team.

In the Spring, an enjoyable event was blueberry picking and pussy willow cutting. One day my sister Josie and I decided to pick blueberries for some pies. Our blueberry patches were up behind the corn field and the piggery and near the Boston and Maine railroad tracks. There was a barbed wire fence that bounded the corn field and needed to be crossed to get to the blueberry patches. Josie cleared the fence, but my attempt resulted in my thigh snagging the wire, causing a painful tear. Being accustomed to "home remedy" medical care, a clean, white handkerchief sufficed for a bandage until after all the blueberries were harvested. It seemed that that was more important than being home crying about a cut. I do not recall it being very troublesome, though I still have the scar to remind me of the incident.

My sister Josie was an avid knitter and she taught me to knit the multi-designed argyle sweater which I knitted for my doll with Josie's leftover yarn. My mother taught me to cook Italian cuisine which she would say was "different," but today is considered the healthy "Mediterranean diet." Each year we celebrated the harvesting of corn and vegetables. I recall my whole family and our friends and their families, who participated in the harvesting, gathering for the occasion. My mother would prepare roasted chickens, peppers, potatoes, onions, home made bread, salad, and roasted corn on the cob. We would all gather outdoors with this good food and home made wine and enjoy singing and harmonizing. I can still remember my father and his friend Albino leading us all in "Mazzolino di fiore," and my mother harmonizing with her friend, Giaginda.

During the summer on warm Sundays, after church, our family would pile into the Plymouth car, picnic basket filled with roast chicken, peppers, tomatoes and bread, and head for either Revere Beach or Nantasket Beach for the day. I remember one Sunday, when we were all in the car, and I was seated on my brother Johnny's lap. I had forgotten a bathing cap, so I ran back into the house to get it. Upon my return to Johnny's lap, I shut the car door on my thumb. I remember it hurting me, but I was not going to spoil the family outing. My good mother used her clean white handkerchief, I applied pressure, and with a lot of reassurance from Johnny and everyone else, I had a great time at the beach.

The wonderful thing about living on a farm was having the vast spaces for play. I recall driving around the entire area with Danny showing me how to drive the Model T Ford. That is a fun memory!

The more usual occurrences were the neighborhood baseball games. All the Perrys and Melones would play competitively.

Recreation at school included not only the usual outdoor games and sports, but also skating on the pond behind what is now Brook School apartments. I recall our teacher, Miss

Marble, skating upright in her usual correct posture, on her figure skates, enjoying it, yet monitoring us students as we skated our recess away.

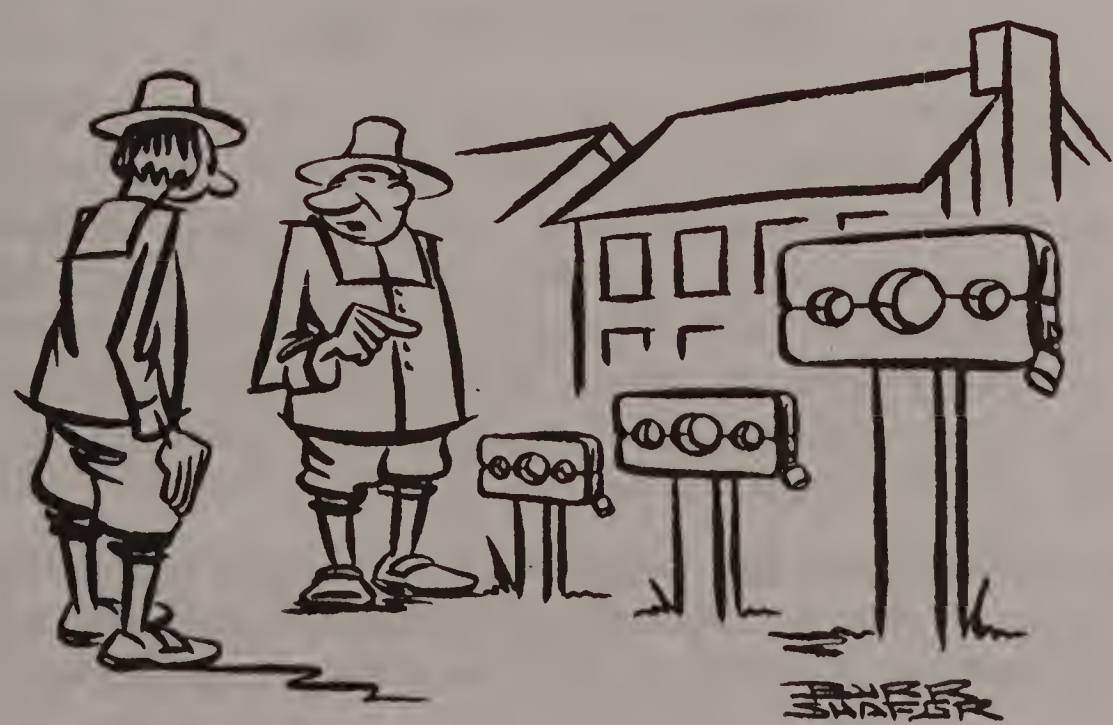
In the Fall and Spring, roller skating was fun. My furthest venture beyond my neighborhood was to Summer Street, where my friend Arlene lived. Our fun was sharing roller skates, the type that were strapped to one's shoes. She would wear one, let me wear the other, and we would roller skate on Summer Street, with one foot on the dirt without a skate, and the other with the roller skate on the pavement. This was a treat, because we could both roller skate, 50% rolling, but 100% fun. Friends were also made through Girl Scouts. I had one memorable summer when I was able to attend Camp Helen Storrow for two weeks and learned about canoeing, boating, and summer camping, which was great! Another memorable recreational event took place at the Weston Golf Club at a friend's birthday party, during which we bowled. Bowling was not a common sport for us, and I was surprised that I could get a score that rewarded me with a silver bracelet which I still wear.

I feel so fortunate to have experienced such a diversity of recreational activities. The main thing that I recall about living at the Melone homestead was the freedom to play, to explore, without fear, without scheduled play; and time constraints. Even though I had chores, piano lessons, Girl Scouts, church, and school homework to contend with, the general sense was one of freedom and interdependence of family and friends, and for that I am truly grateful.

We are so lucky to have all that is available to us today in recreation. I am glad that Weston will have a Recreation Center where supervised safe play, and interaction can take place, hopefully in an intergenerational milieu. For that, I am sure, the town's families will be grateful.

Anna Melone

Anna Melone was born and raised in Weston and graduated from the Weston High School. She received a B.S. and an M.S. in nursing from Boston College and worked as a family nurse practitioner in various cities, including the town of Weston. She was adjunct professor at Lasell Jr. College in Newton. She has two adult daughters and lives in Weston. She is a newly elected director of the Weston Historical Society.



"It seems that juvenile delinquency is on the increase."

LECTURES, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Weston Historical Society sponsored a centennial lecture with slides about the Riverside Recreation Grounds, at the Weston Public Library on Thursday, December 4, 1997 at 7 p.m. The speaker was Robert Pollock, familiar with the Riverside "Rec" from personal experience. The lecture was well attended.

The "Rec" was a popular social and sports center, welcoming one and all. Founded in 1897 by philanthropist businessman Charles Hubbard, it offered gym, football, baseball and softball fields, tennis courts, picnic grounds, athletic track and the largest swimming pool in New England. No wonder it was so popular. Unfortunately, in 1958 a fire destroyed two main buildings, and the same year the government (MDC) ordered the place closed.

* * *

Attention: mark your calendar for **March 26, 1998, 7 p.m. at the Weston High School Media Center**. Our Spring slide lecture will be delivered by Michael Tourgias on the topic of **"King Philip's War in New England."**

Michael Tourgias is the author of the novel **Until I Have No Country** and of a number of other books dealing with New England and environmental themes. He is a frequent guest on the television program "Chronicle," and we have numerous laudatory comments on his lecture, among others that he "knows how to entertain a crowd."

King Philip's War raged in 1675 and 1676 and was a bloody encounter between the colonists and the Indians. Chief Matacomet, a.k.a. King Philip was the son of Massassoit, sachem of the Wampanoags, allied with the Nipmucks. Defeated by colonial troops, he was shot near Mt. Hope (RI) by an Indian in the service of Captain Benjamin Church's Plymouth company.

Our Speakers' Committee is busily working on the details of the presentation at our Annual Charter Dinner, which will take place in early May, 1998. Members will be notified in due time after the details have been worked out regarding place and time, and most importantly, about the lecturer and his/her topic.

* * *

MUSEUM UPDATE

Work is progressing in an orderly fashion in the organization of the Weston Historical Society Museum at the Josiah Smith Tavern. The general division of labor is in the hands of the Curator and two highly dedicated permanent volunteers: **Douglas Henderson**, who is in charge of all documents, which he is sorting into systematic, chronological and alphabetical units; and **George Amadon**, in charge of the hundreds of photographs. Curator **Vera Laska** finished systematizing a small library into sections of books and pamphlets pertaining to the history of Weston, New England and other categories. She also produced two complete sets of BULLETINS and is now engaged in indexing them.

A major accomplishment at the Museum has been a two year project to organize its extensive photographic collection. The credit for this goes to **Pamela Fox**, who applied her know-how to achieve three goals: better preservation of the photographs by placing them in

archival mylar polyester sleeve protectors and acid free folders; identifying as much as possible the subjects shown in the photographs; and filing them by family name, subject matter and geographical location. The collection occupies four file drawers.

Under Pamela Fox' supervision volunteer **Sally Gilman** logged in nearly 100 hours on the project; others who helped were **Barbara Coburn** and **Jean Jones**. In addition to the hundreds of photographs that had been scattered in the rooms of the Museum, the Town Crier donated to the Museum two large boxes of hundreds of photos from their morgue; this was additional work for Amadon, Fox and her helpers. The Museum and the Weston Historical Society is beholden to all volunteers and especially to Pamela Fox for the time, energy and dedication to this work.

Pamela expressed her thanks to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and also to the Newton Historical Society for sharing their experience and methodology, which provided the basis for our system.

Vera Laska

I AM FINE – HOW ARE YOU?

There's nothing the matter with me
  I'm just healthy as I can be.
Have arthritis in both my knees
  And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin,
  But I'm awfully well for the shape I am in.
I think my liver is out of whack
  And a terrible pain is in my back;
My hearing is poor, my sight is dim,
  Most everything seems to be out of trim,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I am in.
  I have arch supports for both my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to go on the street.
  Sleeplessness I have night after night
And in the morning I'm just a sight.
  My memory is failing, my head's in a spin,
I'm peacefully living on aspirin,
  But I'm awfully well for the shape I am in.
The moral is, as this tale we unfold,
  That for you and me who are growing old
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin
  Than to let them know the shape we're in.

This gem came to me from Prague, copied from a Canadian publication. The author is unknown. If anybody knows his/her name, please let me know; ed.

WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN

The Weston Historical Society is looking toward the future and is hereby announcing an ambitious project, approved by the Board of Directors.

"WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN" is a major undertaking, hopefully with the cooperation of all Weston cultural, social, religious, charitable and business organizations.

The results will be presented to the public in a major exhibit in the Weston Public Library in the early part of the year 2000. Planned are also lectures and possibly a commemorative brochure or book. Details to the participants will be forthcoming in the spring and announced also in the Town Crier.

This is how the Society has chosen to "take a written photograph" of the status of the town on the threshold of the new millennium. It will serve as a testimony of its present and a legacy to those who come after us.

At this time the project WESTON 2000 is in the hands of an executive committee, consisting of Mrs. Barbara Coburn, Mrs. Anna Melone, and Vera Laska, chairman.

Any suggestions and ideas are more than welcome by memo or phone to the members of the executive committee.

WHAT ITEMS WOULD YOU PLACE INTO A WESTON TIME CAPSULE?

Send your suggestions to "Weston 2000," Box 343, Weston, MA 02193

AUTHORS WANTED!

During the past few years, we received quite a number of favorable comments on the BULLETIN, which we hereby gratefully acknowledge. What pleases us most is that you consider the BULLETIN lively, since that has been our intention.

We are constantly looking for local color, to keep our publication lively. You, the readers, can contribute to that by sending us your recollections. Memoirs, diaries, bibliographical vignettes are very much in vogue these days. Close your eyes and think of some amusing – or amazing! – episode from your lives, than put pen to paper and write them down for us. What easier way to become a published author?

We at the Weston Historical Society should be the keepers of the town's collective memory. Before the waves of history roll over it, as it is apt to do, we all should try to salvage the particles that make up the mosaic of Weston's history.

Practical hints: if possible, type and make it double spaced, anywhere between three or ten pages. If you have a photograph to go with your story, that is welcome but not obligatory. We retain the right to edit your copy. The best entries would be published in the very next issue in the fall of 1998. If you have questions regarding your opus, call the editor, Vera Laska, at 237-1447.

Vera Laska

Vera Laska

INTRODUCING: VERA LASKA

A native of Czechoslovakia, Vera Laska is an American by choice. Always on fellowships, she received MA degrees in philosophy (logic) and in history, and a Ph.D. in American History from the University of Chicago. She held teaching positions at the University of Illinois and at Roosevelt University in Chicago and served as Foreign Student Counselor at the University of Chicago for several years. She has been professor of American History at Regis College in Weston since 1966; here she held at different times the position of Chairman of the Department of History and Chairman of the Division of Social Sciences. In 1972 she was named among Outstanding Educators of America. Among her other awards are the Kidger Award for Excellence in History (1984) and the George Washington Honor Medal in Communication (1990). She is listed in 5 or 6 WHO'S WHO compendia. She speaks eight languages.

She is the author of seven books, most in American history; her best known books are **Women in the Resistance**, which includes her experience in the Czech resistance and in three concentration camps, Auschwitz, Gross Rosen and Nordhausen (Tunnel) as a political prisoner; and **Two Loves of Benjamin Franklin, Women and Diplomacy**, which was published in Czech while she was Fulbright professor at Charles University (1348) in Prague in 1993. She is also the author of over 300 articles and reviews in professional journals and in newspapers. She reviews for three professional journals, and is on the editorial boards of the **New England Journal of History** and the **International Journal on World Peace**. Since 1972 she has been writing a column in the **Town Criers**. She is a free lance writer and lecturer; this includes chapters in four edited books and giving enrichment lectures on cruise ships.

She is married to Andrew J. Laska, a retired business executive; their two sons attended Weston High School. Vera Laska is a confessed dedicated Westonite, Curator of the Weston Historical Society's Museum and the editor of its BULLETIN.

She is an optimist, and some claim that she has a sense of humor.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

An old Bulletin fluttered down on me in our attic, and its pages reminded me of the proverbial "good ol' days." It told of the days past 125 years ago, when – in 1873 – total school enrollment in Weston was 235, total school appropriation was $4,375 in a town budget of $25,865.03! In those days we had six district schools and a high school.

Here are some of the comments of the erstwhile school committee:

"Many /text/books contain a mass of rules and facts which over-burden the memory."

"All our school houses are now in excellent repair and well furnished."

"It should be regarded as a misfortune for a teacher not to be able to sing."

Compare the above numbers with the last figures available, for the academic year 1996-97: we support 1,867 students with a school appropriation of $13.7 million, out of a total town budget of $30.4 million, i.e. 45% of the total expenditures. Look at those figures: we spend twice the amount of money on one of our offspring as was the entire school budget a century ago. (I know, I know, but please do not call me with economic lessons, I have homemade pontifications in this respect; I simply thought it an interesting comparison). What

is noteworthy is that all but 5% of our high school graduates go on to further education, 88% of them to four year colleges.

A footnote to the old school houses: school number 5 has been moved and is today on the Howe property on Ware Street. It is for sale. It is in debatable shape, used as a warehouse. A new owner wants to tear it down, and it would have to be moved if purchased. Sad ending for the walls that once heard the laughter of youngsters.

Vera Laska

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yester year; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.

All three books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 1998 Volume XXIX, No. 2

Nineteenth Century 25-inch doll at the Weston Museum. Photo by Andrew J. Laska

HISTORICAL DOLLS AT THE WESTON MUSEUM

There are four dolls in the collection of the Weston Historical Society Museum. Oh, how I wish that they could talk and tell me about their lives as beloved companions of some little girl of long ago! But they are sitting or reclining silently, their past a mystery never to be revealed.

They intrigued me sufficiently to repair to the library and investigate the origins of dolls in general; as it is par for the course, research disclosed some interesting facts about them.

If I could not discover the owners of these dolls that came from Weston families, at least I found out about their general provenance.

Dolls are children's toys modeled on the human form, mostly, although not exclusively, female. Some were found in ancient graves, perhaps the oldest in a Babylonian one; it was just a fragment, and it had movable arms. Others were unearthed from children's graves in Egypt, Greece, Rome and even from early Christian burials in the catacombs. Most likely, they had a religious connection, to serve the dead in their afterlife. The Encyclopedia Britannica tells us that in classical times "marriageable" girls consecrated their discarded dolls to Diana and Venus. As far back as the year 2000 B.C., the Egyptians created "paddle dolls," made of painted flat wood, without legs. Strangely, I found a similar flat wooden doll among the Indians of Brazil in Amazonia; it does have legs and a fur skirt.

Some of the oldest female figurines found in archeological excavations are referred to as Venuses, and they have been excavated in many locations from France and the Czech Republic to Malta and Pakistan. We call them dolls, but they are not toys but fertility symbols. The word "doll" as we use it today, dates only to the beginning of the 18th century; it was derived most likely from the word "idol" or the girl's name of Dorothy.

The oldest American dolls are those of the Aztecs and the Mayas. Indians are known for their Kachina or spirit dolls, which are highly praised and elaborate. You can find them today in their modern transfiguration in the American South-West. Colonial and early America followed the European trends in dolls. We know of 15th century German dolls from Nuremberg, which later became the center of doll and toy manufacturing. Dolls' bodies were made of various materials, wood, stone, bone, ivory, fur or cloth. The heads were of alabaster, wood or wax. In the early 18th century in Dresden, Germany, they started to make doll heads from ceramics and porcelain. Then 19th century France contributed the swivel neck head on dolls made of kid covered wood or leather stuffed with sawdust.

Our grandmothers have known dolls with movable eyes and joints, while our mothers played with dolls whose heads and bodies were molded of plastic. Most of us remember the Kewpie dolls (1903) or the Betsy-Wetsy dolls (1937), and the still popular Barbie dolls (1959), with their friend Ken and their luxurious outfits that made their inventor rich and famous. One of the very first American imports into liberated Prague in the early 1990s was a collection of Barbie dolls, mink cape and all! In spite of the high price, it was selling like hot cakes.

There is quite a bibliography on the subject of dolls, including The Collector's Encyclopedia of Dolls (2 vols., New York: Crown, 1986), edited by Dorothy S. Coleman et al. that tells you everything you ever wanted to know about dolls and more.

As to our own dolls in the Weston Museum, we were fortunate to have a visit from a doll expert, representing the federation of doll collectors, Ms. Nancy A. Smith, who gave us the benefit of her expertise and a highly appreciated evaluation of our dolls in residence.

One doll of 12 inches has a solid dome china head and limbs and cloth body. Her type of dolls were first made in Germany around 1850. She wears a blond mohair wig. She must have come from a fine family, for she has elegant clothing, including a white ribbed cotton dress and a wonderful hat. The other 12 inch doll has a china head and a crude, homemade body. Her hairstyle is from the 1860s. Her dress looks like it was stitched by a child. While the first doll would be valued at about $300 mostly because of her fancy outfit, this doll has only historical value.

The third doll, of the same size as the two above, has a Parian head, made of soft marble-like china, cloth body and leather arms. She has light brown hair, coiffed in a simple style dating from the 1870s. She was born in Germany. She is dressed in old underwear and a blue skirt; she is missing one shoe; would there be somewhere a prince with the missing shoe looking for her?

The largest of our dolls measures 25 inches. She has a china head, cloth body, leather arms, blue eyes and black hair in the so called flat top style. Such dolls originated also in Germany around 1860-1880. Alas, she is missing one hand. She has beautiful clothing, an elaborate plaid wool dress and blue leather shoes. She is our pride and joy, sitting on the sofa in the former living room of the Jones sisters at the Josiah Smith Tavern, ready to welcome visitors to our Museum.

If you have orphaned dolls in your attic, please consider having them join their Weston forebears, who would welcome them with open arms to be adopted by the Museum.

Vera Laska

DIDYOU KNOW that $20.7 billion was spent in the United States in 1996 for toys? That is an estimated $350 per child per year; 80% of the toys sold in the United States are imported, and that is about one third of all toys manufactured internationally. Sorry, I could not dig up the figures for dolls only. Source: Toy Manufacturers of America, as reported in Time, 12/22/97. p.19.

TRACING THE HISTORY OF THE NATHANIEL JENNISON HOUSE

The Nathaniel Jennison House was built in 1732. In 1924 it was moved across the road to its present location at 266 Glen Road, where it is the residence of the author. This is the first of two parts of its history. Ed.

The history of this house begins with a William Jennison who came from Colchester, England to New England in 1630 with John Winthrop, the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony purchased the land from a line three miles north of the Merrimack River to a line three miles south of the Charles River, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, from the Plymouth Company in March of 1628.

Sir Richard Saltonstall also came with Winthrop in 1630 and on July 30, 1630 formally organized a settlement on the Charles River near what is now Watertown Square. This settlement was names Watertown.

William Jennison was one of the original settlers of Watertown. The first few generations of the Jennison family in New England spelled their names "Jenison". Since later generations have adopted the spelling "Jennison," the latter spelling has been used throughout this history. William Jennison became a prominent citizen of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was admitted as a freeman to the town of Watertown on May 18, 1631. A freeman was a member of the church and had the right to vote and hold office. These rights were restricted

to males who were at least 21 years old. A freeman had to be a permanent member of the community and as such was usually a landowner.

Jennison was a selectman of Watertown from 1634 to 1642 and again in 1644. He was one of the first three commissioners of Watertown whose duty it was "to end small causes." He served on numerous committees, often as chairman, dealing with the determination of boundaries between towns, laying out of new towns, taxation, Indian affairs and contested land claims. He was a deputy to the General Court from 1635 to 1642 and also in 1645. William Jennison became an Ensign in the Watertown Train-band (militia) on August 16, 1631 and in 1636 was chosen its Captain.

In 1633, he made a trip to Bermuda as a pilot on the ship Thunder. In 1636, he was in charge of the Watertown Company of militia that went to Block Island to avenge the murder of John Oldham by the Pequot Indians. William Jennison lived on a 50 acre parcel of land, called a homestall, on the north side of what is now Mount Auburn Street in Watertown.

According to the early records of Watertown, he was granted several tracts of land. Among these grants was a farm of 150 acres which he received in 1642. This farm was to become the site of the house which is the subject of this history.

In 1645, William Jennison sold his homestall to Rev. John Knowles and he probably returned to Cohchester, England, shortly thereafter. He died there; his will was signed on July 17, 1667. There was no mention in his will of the 150 acres of farm land in Watertown. Nor is there any record that he ever sold the 150 acres of farm land in Watertown. However, it seems clear that he either gave or sold this 150 acre parcel to his younger brother, Robert Jennison.

Robert was also one of the early settlers of Watertown. He had a daughter, Elizabeth, born there in 1637. He was admitted as a freeman in Watertown in May, 1645. He possessed a six acre homestall on what is now Mount Auburn Street, just east of the Mill Bridge.

The following trivial, but quaint, excerpt appears in the Watertown Records: "At a meeting of ye select men at ye house of Decon Bright ye: 14: of Decem: 1680: old Father Jenison requesting an old three that is decaied yt stands alitle way from ye said Jenisons: ye select men left ye matter to William Bond senior to act in it: so yt if ye said tree be ef no use to ye Towne yt then ye said Jenison may have it." Robert Jennison died on July 4, 1690. In his will he left "unto my grandchild William Jenison forty acres of my farme, which was my brother's formerly: granted unto him by this Towne." Also in his will "unto my grandson Robert Jenison I give thirty acres of my within mentioned farme that was formerly my Brother William Jenison's." The remainder of his land and presumably the remainder of this farm was bequeathed to Robert's son, Samuel. This farm seems to be the same as the 150 acre farm that was granted to William Jennison in 1642.

Samuel, son of Robert Jennison, was born in 1645 in Watertown. He was admitted as a freeman on October 12, 1682. Thereafter he served the town in many capacities. He was a county commissioner in 1683 and 1690 and he was "chosen to kepe the Town Book" (town clerk) in 1691. In 1692, he was the moderator of the town meeting. On March 24, 1692/3, he was chosen to be a selectman and a constable for one year. [Until 1752, the Julian calendar was used. The Julian year began on what is now March 25th on the present Gregorian calendar. On the Julian calendar, March was the first month of the year. Consequently prior

to 1752, dates from January 1st through March 24th are usually written as above, 1692/3, meaning 1692 by the Julian system and 1693 by the Gregorian system.]

Samuel married Judith Macomber on October 30, 1666 and they had ten children. Their oldest son, Samuel, was born on October 12, 1673. Among their other children were William, born on October 17, 1676, and Robert, born on July 24, 1684. The author has referred to William and Robert above as having inherited part of the farm from their grandfather, Robert Jennison.

Samuel senior, the son of Robert Jennison, died in October 1701. His inventory refers to him as "Ensign Samuel Jenison," so in addition to his other positions mentioned above, he must have also served in the militia.. In his will, there is no specific mention of the balance of the 150 acre farm which he had inherited from his father. However, there is the following statement: "Secondly I give and bequeath to my eldest son Samuell Jenison besids what I have allredy given him...." It can be inferred from this statement that he had already given his interest in the 150 acre farm to his son, Samuel. No record has been found that he disposed of this land in any other way. Subsequently Samuel Junior bought the remainder of this farm from his brothers, William and Robert, on June 2, 1708 for 35 pounds in silver. The deed for this transaction between the brothers referred to the sale of an interest in 150 acres of land which had belonged to their uncle Capt. William Jennison of Watertown. The land was described as being bounded on the south by the Dedham town line. This part of Dedham became Needham in 1711 and later this part of Needham became Wellesley in 1881. Thus in 1708, Samuel Jennison became the sole owner of the 150 acre farm in Watertown that was granted to William Jennison in 1642.

Samuel Jennison (Junior) served the Town of Watertown in various capacities which included constable, surveyor and tything man. On March 1, 1720/1 he became a selectman. He and his wife, Mary, had 11 children. Among them were Samuel, born on September 26, 1704, William, born on February 9, 1706/7, Nathaniel, born on April 5, 1709, and John, born on February 19, 1710/11.

Samuel Jennison (Junior) died intestate on December 2, 1730, and his real estate was divided among his heirs on March 30, 1732. The 150 acre farm in question was described as being in Weston (originally part of Watertown, Weston was incorporated as a separate town in 1713) and "Bounded Southerly upon Nedham Line," and containing 164 acres 31 rods, probably as determined by a more accurate survey at that time. The farm was valued at 738 pounds. This parcel was set off in three equal parts to his sons, to Nathaniel the east part, to John the middle part, and to Samuel the west part. Each part contained 54 1/2 acres and 37 rods. In the inventory there is reference to the "Home Lot" and "Dwelling House" in Watertown. There is no mention of any buildings on the farm in Weston, so it can be concluded that the house had not been built as of March 30, 1732.

Nathaniel, son of Samuel Jennison, was born in Watertown on April 5, 1709. He married Abigail Mead of Lexington, Massachusetts on October 23, 1729. As mentioned above, he inherited the east part of a farm in Weston on March 30, 1732 at the age of 22. There was no mention of any buildings on the Weston land at that time. According to the Watertown records, the first three children of Nathaniel and Abigail Mead Jennison were born in Watertown. Their third child was named Nathaniel and he was born on December 5, 1732; in the records of Weston it is recorded that Nathaniel was baptised in Weston on December

10, 1732. The births of their following children are all recorded in Weston. Because of these records, it can be concluded that Nathaniel Jennison probably moved to Weston in 1732 and that he probably built his house during that same year.

There was little mention of Nathaniel in the early records of Weston. In May of 1734, Nathaniel and his brother, John, were enjoined by law to work at the highway in their district. In 1746, Nathaniel signed a petition to have the church (meeting house) moved to the south side of Weston (this petition was not successful). Finally, in 1757, Nathaniel was listed as being one of the "Alarm Men."

Nathaniel moved to Rutland, Massachusetts shortly before his death, probably to live with his son, Nathaniel, Junior. He died there on May 18, 1769. By will he left all his real estate in Weston to his son, Nathaniel, as follows: "To my beloved son Nathaniel Jenison whom I likewise constitute make and ordain my sole executor of this my will and testament, I give and bequeath, all my estate both real and personal in Weston or else where consisting of lands, buildings, and the like."

Nathaniel Jennison (Junior) probably moved from Weston to the Rutland District in 1760. [The northwest part of Rutland was made a District in 1749, and then on June 14, 1774, it was made a separate town and given the name of Hutchinson for Thomas Hutchinson, governor of Massachusetts from 1769 to 1774. In November 1776, the name was changed to Barre in honor of the distinguished advocate of colonial rights in the British Parliament.] Nathaniel Junior was not listed as a real estate owner in Weston after 1760 and he first purchased land in the Rutland District from Nathaniel Hatch on June 30, 1760.

While living in Barre, an incident took place involving Nathaniel Jennison, Junior which was to have great significance in the history of slavery in the United States and in Massachusetts in particular. As a result of the incident, several court cases evolved which collectively are known as the "Barre Slave Case," or the "Quork Walker Case."

In 1754, a man by the name of James Caldwell in the Rutland District bought a Negro man, Mingo, his wife, Dinah, and their infant son, Quork, for 108 pounds. Caldwell died in 1763. Subsequently Caldwell's widow, Isabel, married Nathaniel Jennison, Junior on March 28, 1769. Five years later, Isabel died and because Isabel had inherited ownership of the Negro slave Quork Walker, upon her death Nathaniel Jennison became the owner of Quork.

In 1781, however, the late James Caldwell's brothers, John and Seth, approached Quork and told him that under the new constitution of Massachusetts he was a free man. In 1780 the new constitution of Massachusetts declared freedom and equality for all men. Furthermore, the Caldwells persuaded Quork to leave Jennison and come to work for their farm. About a week later, on April 30, 1781, according to court records, the following incident took place. Nathaniel Jennison, Jr. went to the Caldwell's farm and assaulted Quork Walker, threw him down and "struck him several violent blows upon his back and arm with the handle of a whip, and did and then and there imprison, and other enormities to him."

On May 1, 1781, Quork Walker sued Nathaniel Jennison, Jr. for damages for assault and imprisonment in the Superior Court of Common Pleas for the county of Worcester. The jury decided in favor of Quork Walker on the basis that Quork "is a freeman, and not the proper Negro slave of the defendant;" and they assessed damage against the defendant in the amount of 60 pounds.

Nathaniel Jennison, Jr. also sued John and Seth Caldwell in the same court claiming that they had stolen his Negro servant. That court found in favor of Jennison. The decision was appealed by the Caldwells to the Supreme Judicial Court at Worcester where it was heard in September, 1781. This court reversed the decision of the Superior Court and assessed damages against Jennison in the amount of 50 pounds.

Finally, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts sued Jennison on criminal charges for assaulting, beating and imprisoning a black man. This case was tried at the Supreme Judicial Court in 1783. It was decided in April 1783 that Jennison had no right to beat or imprison Quork Walker, and Jennison was fined 40 shillings.

These decisions culminating in 1783 helped determine that slavery no longer would be tolerated in Massachusetts. Massachusetts was the first state to abolish slavery. Nathaniel Jennison, after the above proceedings, took his remaining slaves, including Quork's brother Prince, to Connecticut where he sold them. Later Prince and other former slaves moved back to Barre where they lived as free men.

George P. Bates

This is an abbreviated form of the manuscript entitled "The Nathaniel Jennison House," on file in the Weston Public Library and in the Museum of the Weston Historical Society. Footnotes have been omitted here because the manuscript contains copies of the original sources.

George Preston Bates lives with his wife Nancy Biddle Bates in the Jennison House. He is a graduate of Harvard, class of 1954, and of the Harvard Business School, class of 1958. He is president of a contract packaging company and of a turf farming business. He is highly active in Weston town affairs as chairman of both the Conservation Commission and the Sewer Committee; he is also treasurer of the Weston Forest and Trail Association. His monograph on the Jennison House is one of the most thorough and meticulously prepared manuscripts of local history. Ed.

What spices?

THE WHITTIER SUNDIAL

A while ago I catalogued a framed drawing of the Whittier sundial, done by James Muldoon, a member of the Weston Historical Society, as an artifact owned by the Society. George Amadon, a member of the museum staff, suggested that I try to obtain a photograph of this relic due to the reason that from 1855 to 1856 it stood on land owned by Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, at the junction of roadways now Newton Street and South Avenue in Weston.

Dr. Bowditch was the third son of Nathaniel Bowditch, noted mathematician of Salem, Massachusetts.

Dr. Bowditch, a Boston physician, purchased property then known as Brookside from Gilbert N. Cheney, on January 21, 1851 and used it mainly as a summer home. He loved it. He writes of Weston: "A quiet country town with little life among its inhabitants, but within its borders are some of the loveliest of nature's quiet nooks." He mentions that Brookside was over a hundred and fifty years old; the buildings had low ceilings, spacious rooms, solid oak rafters, and huge fireplaces. He describes a little brook, "sparkling like a thread of silver light."

The Whittier sundial.

Dr. Bowditch wished to have a sundial placed in front of the old homestead. After a search, he acquired one from a descendant of Dr. Waterhouse, eminent Cambridge physician, who had picked it up in England. Dr. Bowditch asked his friend, the poet John Greenleaf Whittier, to write a few lines fitting the beauties of this pleasant home. Whittier obliged, and Whittier's words are inscribed on the plate as shown in the photograph of the sundial. The words were engraved on the finest brass plate by a well known artist, Hammatt Billings, along with Whittier's initials and signs of the zodiak. The sundial was erected on the site of the homestead on July 17, 1855, where it stood for abut a year, when, as Dr. Bowditch writes, fate forced him to sell this property.

He kept the sundial for a while, settling in one place then another. Upon invitation, Dr. Bowditch visited his old friend, John M. Forbes on Naushon Island on Buzzard's Bay on the Cape, and out of gratitude for his friend's kindness, presented Mr. Forbes with the sundial. As time wore on, Dr. Bowditch came to regret this impulsive action, largely on account of his friend Whittier's lines inscribed on the sundial. Was not this a personal thing between Whittier and himself? Mr. Forbes came to learn of Dr. Bowditch's discomfort and returned the sundial to the Bowditch family with the understanding that he could have a replica made of it. This was done, and this replica stands before the Forbes mansion on Naushon Island today. But what of the original? I was determined to find the present owner.

After several calls, I contacted a Bowditch descendant, Dr. James L. Bowditch, formerly a trustee of Meadowbrook School inWeston. Through the internet, he supplied me with a complete list of local Bowditch descendants. It didn't take long to locate the present owner of the Whittier sundial, a direct descendant of Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, Hoel Bowditch of Foxborough, Massachusetts.

One afternoon, my wife Laura and I paid a visit to the Hoel Bowditches. We were ushered into the living room, and the Whittier sundial was produced, as Hoel stated, a real treasure. On the brass plate, there were the lines of John Greenleaf Whittier:

With warning hand I mark time's rapid flight
From life's glad morning to its solemn night
Yet through the dear God's love I also show
There's light above me by the shade below

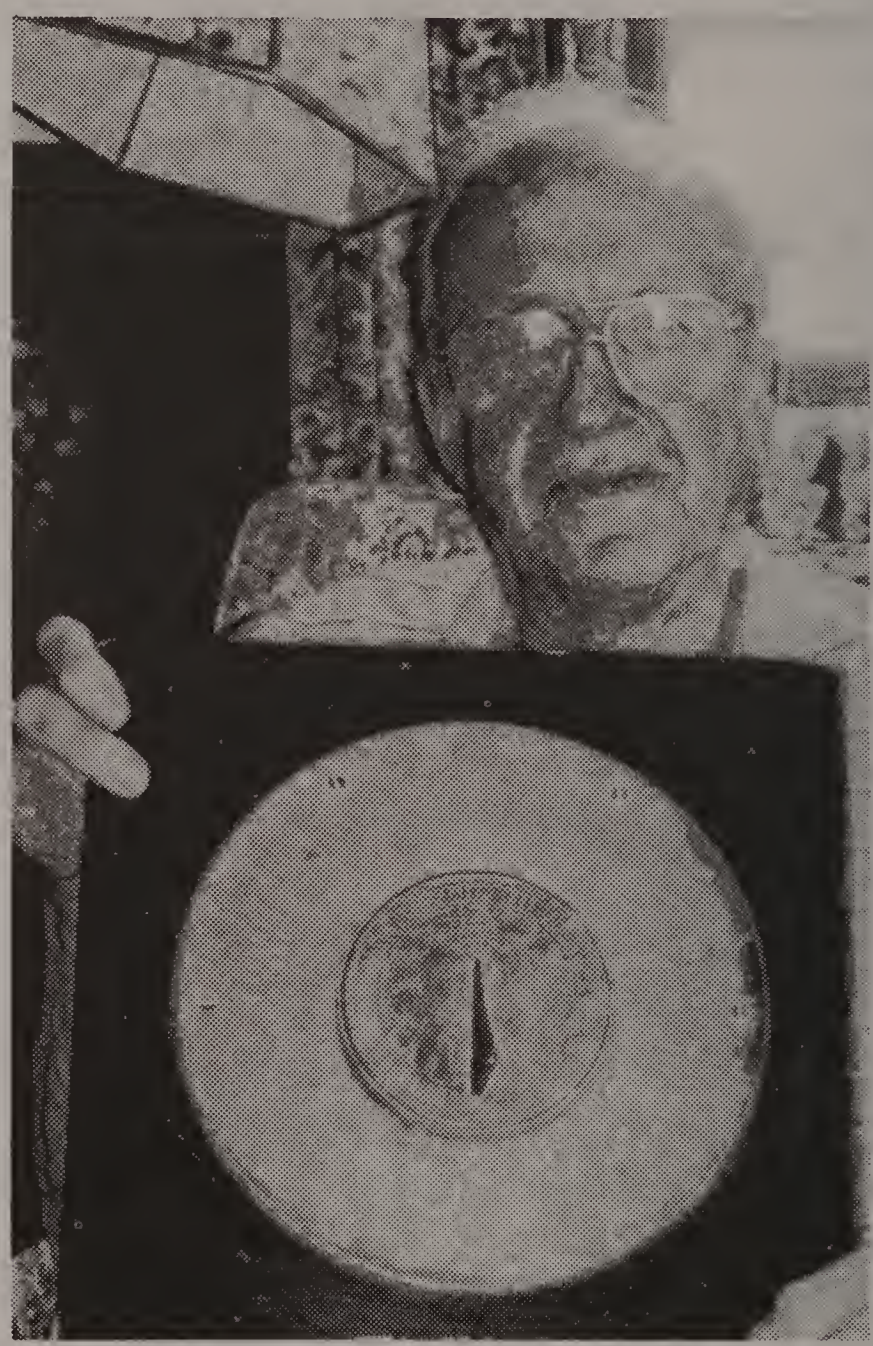
On the bottom is the notation:

J. G. W.
Relic from
Old England
placed here
by
H.I. and O.B.
July 17, 1855
Transferred to
Naushon
Sept. 1, 1866

The story has a sequel. In our conversation with the Bowditches, it turned out that Hoel's wife Mary attended Milton Academy Girls School, and that her father, Walter Hinchman,

taught me English in the Boys School. My class at Milton was '34; Hoel's at Moses Brown School in Rhode Island also '34. One spring afternoon long ago, there was a track meet between the two schools. While Hoel was leaping over hurdles, yours truly was running the half mile. I have added this sequel, because research can lead to something quite different, in this case, an episode from the personal past.

* * * * *



Hoel Bowditch holding the sundial.

The author thanks George Amadon for stirring him into the detective work in search of the sundial; James Muldoon for lending him The Life and Correspondence of Henry Ingersol Bowditch by Vincent Y. Bowditch (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1902); James L. Bowditch for supplying the Bowditch descendants' chart; Weston Howland, Jr., great-grandson of John M. Forbes, and Roger Gregg of Forbes & Co. for pertinent information; Theodore G. Rand, former headmaster of Meadowbrook School in Weston for advice; and mostly Hoel Bowditch for keeping the Whittier sundial with such tender loving care.

Samuel R. Payson

The editor, once a teacher always a teacher, would like to plant a large "A" on the above article and compliment the author for his patient, painstaking and persevering job tracking down a Weston artifact. May this serve as an inspiration to others. Ed.

LECTURE ON KING PHILIP'S WAR

The Weston Historical Society, with the co-sponsorship of theWeston Public Library, presented a lecture on King Philip's War on Thursday, March 26, 1998 at 7 p.m. in the Media Center of the Weston High School.

The speaker was Mr. Michael Tougias, author of a recent novel, Until I have No Country (North Attleborough, Mass.: Covered Bridge Press, 1996).

King Philip's War (1675-1676) lasted eighteen months and was the most devastating war in American history in proportion to the population of the time. More than half of the colonists' settlements were destroyed, and there was talk of simply abandoning the New England colonies. Two Indians were hung for murder, and several tribes under the leadership of Chief Metacom, a.k.a. King Philip, went on the warpath. After horrible carnage, King Philip was executed, his body quartered, hung from a tree, and his head on a pole displayed in Plymouth colony most likely for years.

Some of the fighting reached Sudbury and Weston, Mr. Tougias said, while presenting his story accompanied by slides.

While his book is a novel and offers a romantic portrayal of this savage war, a non-fiction history of the same war was published:; Jill Lepore, The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1997). This book has been most favorably received by critics in the press and in academia. It is based on some 400 letters of the times found in several archives in New England and — among others— the narrative of Mary Rowlandson, who was a captive of Indians for three months, and whose story became the very first American bestseller, in Lepore's words.

Vera Laska

NEW ENGLAND WEATHER FORECASTING

The Annual Dinner of the Weston Historical Society took place on Thursday, May 7, 1998 at 6:30 p.m. at the St. Julia's Church new dining room. Just for the record, dinner consisted of lighted herbed chicken breasts, asparagus, curried rice, field green salad, lemon tart, strawberries, with BYOB, and cost $20 per person (yes, times change!).

The flyer announcing the event promised a "fun evening," and indeed a fun evening it was. It could not have been otherwise, given the personality of our speaker, Judson D. Hale, Sr. This was a second and return engagement of Mr. Hale, whose humor and wit always precedes him.

He is the editor of The Old Farmer's Almanac, that classical New England institution that was started by its first editor, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792; he remained at the helm for fifty-four years. The Almanac is the oldest continuously published periodical on the North American continent.

He is also editor of Yankee Magazine, that miraculous compendium offered every month to a faithful public; it contains an interesting selection of articles, not exclusively on New England topics, but ranging from asteroids and clones to green peppers and poetry. Among its regular departments are a monthly calendar of events and a Yankee Swoppers' Column. This is also one publication that provides you with practical and often surprising advertise-

ments. Both Yankee Magazine and The Old Farmer's Almanac can be reached in Dublin, New Hampshire 03444.

It was from the Almanac that Hale proffered its audience countless vignettes, always wrapped in his traditional humor, from readers' questions to editorial answers. He concentrated on the methods of writing the essential part of the Almanac, namely the weather indications (not a forecast!) for the coming year, two pages devoted to each month. It was an unforgettable evening, informative as well as entertaining.

Vera Laska

MEMORIAL DAY 1998

The 119th Memorial Day was celebrated in front of the Town Hall on Monday, May 25, 1998, at 10 a.m. under the sponsorship of the Memorial Day Committee, George F. Amadon, Chairman. Members of his committee were Mrs. Beverly Dillaway, Max Pelsue, Rev. Susan Crane and Gary Walcott, with Henry Atkins as unofficial adviser.

The ceremonies were inaugurated by the ringing of the Paul Revere bell at the First Parish Church and musical selections by the band. Amadon led the Pledge of allegiance, followed by remarks of Elizabeth D. Nichols of the Board of Selectmen and the Rev. Stephen Melius' invocation. "America the Beautiful" was sung next, followed by more musical selections.

The keynote address was given by James Lou Gorman of Weston. He is a captain of the U.S. Naval Reserve, retired, and a resident of Weston. He is a well known baseball expert and former executive consultant to the Boston Red Sox. His moving speech is on file in its entirety at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society at the Josiah Smith Tavern.

The benediction was offered by pastor Judith Ann Wesley Summer of the First Baptist Church. After a further musical selection, wreaths were laid at the Town Hall boulder. The Order of the March of the subsequent parade consisted of the Weston Police, Weston Firemen, parade automobiles, Weston Veterans, marching band, Weston Daisies, Brownies and Scouts, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Weston Soccer, Little League, Children's cars and decorated bicycles.

Vera Laska

AUTUMN MOOD IN WESTON

The shadows are longer, the trees are still,
The setting sun and the autumn chill.

A time for foreboding, yet a time of grace,
A time for reflection for the human race.

Geese low overhead, black night in the west,
Each voicing his preference of a place for rest.

George Amadon

Willaim Martin

INTRODUCING: WILLIAM MARTIN

William Martin has lived in Weston with his family - his wife, Chris, and his children, Bill, Dan, and Elizabeth - since 1980.

Not only has he found it a place filled with interesting history, but a good place to write history, too. He's the author of six novels, including the best sellers, Back Bay and Cape Cod, Annapolis, and his new book, Citizen Washington, a biographical novel about the life of George Washington, to be published next February.

He says that he has had more than his share of research adventures writing his novels. He has helped sail three-masted schooners. He has taken the helm of a nuclear submarine four hundred feet below the surface of the sea. He has wandered the halls of Mount Vernon in the middle of the night and felt the ghosts. Of course, for every day of research adventure, he has spent fifty in library stacks and five hundred at his desk. At least, he says, his desk is in Weston, and he has a wonderful view.

Luckily, Bill Martin also finds the time to serve on the Board of Directors of the Weston Historical Society.

MUSEUM UPDATE

Curator Vera Laska finished indexing all bound BULLETINS from the first issue in 1964 to August, 1991 by titles of the articles. The next project is to prepare an index of the entire texts of the BULLETIN.

Since the Weston chapter of the American Legion ceased to function, its files have been deposited in the archives of our Museum.

We have 14 copies of the new Lamson History of the Town of Weston left; this is the reissue with a new foreword and a much needed index. Get your copy or consider it for gift giving — Christmas comes sooner than you think!

Our library has been recently enriched by an interesting business biography that has close connections to Weston: Arthur M. Kenison, Dumaine's Amoskeag: Let the Record Stand (Manchester, NH; St. Anselm College Press, 1997). It is the history of the Manchester enterprizes that were developed in the 19th century but folded as a result of the depression. The moving forces for much of their existence were Frederick D. Dumaine Senior (1866-1951) and Junior (1902-1997), the latter a long time resident of Weston.

In the Spring, 1998 BULLETIN, in the "Museum Update" article the name of SAM PAYSON was inadvertently omitted. Sam Payson has been faithfully helping out in George Amadon's department, cataloguing our maps. He has been volunteering countless hours to our good cause. Until we start handing out diplomas to our volunteers, let it be said here officially that we are deeply grateful to Sam for his dedication and his contributions of time and energy.

REMINDER: WESTON 2000: Organizations' reports are due November 1st, preferably with photographs, possibly with a contribution.

TIME CAPSULE: Please let us have your ideas!

QUESTIONS: Call 237-1447, Laska.

WESTON HISTORY

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yesteryear; hardcover, $7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, $7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, $29.95.

All three books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling $3.00.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Membership dues: Individuals $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 1996 Volume XXVII, No. 1

Madame Marian R. Case

MADAME MARIAN AND "STONE WALLS OF WESTON"

Memory — not necessarily history.

A two and one half dollar gold piece. Have you ever seen one? I doubt it. Gold coins went out of circulation in the United States in 1933. I still have one, and it is linked in my memory with the Case sisters, specifically with Madame Marian, and with stone walls.

My parents moved to Weston from Newton in 1908, and rented a house, still standing on Ash Street, from the Case estates. I remember that my mother always referred to the Case sisters as Madame Louise and Madame Marian. The Case estate needed the Ash Street house in 1914 for a chauffeur's residence. My father acquired the land at 78 Chestnut Street and built the house where I now live from the Barker farm which at that time occupied a good stretch of land along the south side of the street.

Large estates were common in Weston in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Weston Historical Sociaty Museum has a framed page from the Boston Sunday Herald of May 1, 1902, headlined "Weston — The Lennox of Eastern Massachusetts," with pictures of ten Weston "mansions," of which three, including the Case house, are still standing.

The Case family bought land facing Wellesley, School and Newton Streets in 1863, and the home which they built there is now used by the Weston public schools as an administration center.

The two Case daughters, Louise and Marian, inherited the estate. Madame Louise, as I remember her, received the mansion, barns and adjoining property, on the east side of the intersection of Wellesley and Newton Streets. Madame Marian received the land and buildings along Wellesley Street south of the intersection.

The sisters also inherited from their parents a love of the land and a pride in well tended fields and woods.

Madame Louise used large areas of her property for work with various horticultural institutions, principally Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum. Madame Marian was personally involved with all aspects of the management of her property. She added several parcels to her own holdings, and in 1909 Hillcrest Farm was established for experiments in scientific agriculture and also "to employ the boys of the town through their long summer vacation."[1]

It is not my purpose here to write a history, either of the Case estate, the Case sisters, or Hillcrest Farm. In any case, the Weston Historical Society Museum has a fairly complete set of pamphlets about the "Hillcrest Farm Boys" and their summer activities between 1909 and 1943.

Furthermore, there are still a few people living in Weston who worked on Hillcrest Farm, and whose memories of the farm are more valid than mine, since I never worked there.[2]

I don't know when Madame Marian started the Case Essay Prize Competition, but I was a freshman in Weston High School for the last one in 1929. Entries were limited to the four high school grades, and each grade competed for three prizes — a ten dollar gold piece, a five dollar gold piece, and a two and one half dollar gold piece.

Madame Marian set the theme each year, and that year "Stone Walls of Weston" was chosen. Since the Case estate has many examples of stone walls, which were always kept in good repair (most of them are still standing, if you care to look), it was obvious, to me at least, that the Case stone walls should be included in my manuscript.

Moreover, the competition was always held in the fall, against the wishes of the teachers, for academic reasons, but, in a way, this was lucky for me. Weston High School had had a football team early in the century, but had not fielded a team since 1917. Football was taken up again in my freshman year, and since the squad was small, and I was large for my age, I made the team, and promptly sprained by right wrist.

I took my problem to the chairman of the essay committee and was allowed to draft an amanuensis. I chose Harry Jones, the one person in the entire high school with perfect penmanship. To this day his handwriting is copy book perfect.

Whether it was my choice of the Case farm stone walls, or my choice of stand-in copier, I have no way of knowing. I still have the prize and I am still fascinated by Weston's stone walls. I owe you, Harry!

Douglas Henderson

Former diplomat Douglas Henderson is a long time resident of Weston.

[1]Marian Roby Case. "The Second Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston, Mass," Weston: By the Author, 1911, p.4.

[2]If so, please share your memories with our readers. V.L.

THE POCKETBOOK ISSUE THAT ATTRACTED WEALTHY BOSTON TAXPAYERS TO WESTON IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY

Weston's high property values are generally attributed to its good schools, its location at the intersection of the Mass Turnpike and Route 128, and its large amount of green space. While good zoning and conservation policies initiated in the 1950s (earlier than in most neighboring towns) can be credited for the town's pleasing aesthetics, one of the reasons Weston had large tracts of land that could be preserved was that land had been held in the estates of wealthy families. These families had acquired the land in the last quarter of the 19th century and the first dozen years in the 20th. We will never know all of the reasons for their locating in Weston but there is evidence that pocketbook considerations, and not just the desire for rural surroundings, could have been significant factors.

The relocation of wealthy residents to suburban towns began in the late 1860s and by 1916 was described as having been "a veritable hegira under which the attractive suburbs of Boston were rapidly built up at the expense of the city's tax rolls." [1] The population shift could also have been described as "tax flight," because blame for the city's loss of tax base, and the betterment of the suburbs', was placed on the property tax imposed on intangible property. By the late 1800s this principally meant cash and the stocks and bonds of out-of-state corporations. For centuries the property tax imposed on highly visible farm land and domestic animals had been a successful source of government revenues, but by the mid-1800s many states struggled with the problems of imposing this same tax on the easily concealed wealth of corporations and their shareholders. For an industrial state like Massachusetts it was particularly difficult.

Until the mid-19th century Massachusetts had faced few financial problems. The state's tax system, brought from England by the Bay Colonists, had been maintained continuously through Massachusetts' early statehood. Even in the years following the revolution, when wealth from maritime commerce had led to sizeable fortunes in intangible personal property, there were still no serious issues, thanks to "an easy-going administration of the tax laws." [2] The imposition of property taxes on this class of property had led simply to increasing government assets.

The state's circumstances were changed by the mid-1800s. There were steep increases in both state taxes and expenditures: the state helped finance the Civil War through the issuance of bonds; immigration surged, almost doubling the population of the cities between 1880 and 1910; and citizens' needs were matched with a willingness to provide social services.[3] The philosophy behind the expansion of the role of government in these years is attributed to the "tradition of government leadership and social responsibility that was rooted far back in the Commonwealth's history." [4] Between 1861 and 1874 state and local taxes increased from $8.3 million to $33.7 million, and the per capita tax burden tripled.

The legislature attempted to increase revenues and remove administrative tax problems by adopting a corporation franchise and state taxes on banks, but revenues proved insufficient, and tremendous pressure on local property taxes remained. Boston tackled the problem with the appointment in 1865 of a vigorous and efficient assessor, Mr. Thomas Hills. Mr. Hills produced revenues but with results that were not those intended. His approach to increasing revenues was tax law enforcement, greatly increasing the

value of Boston's property assessments. The unintended result was that within the first five years $14 million in taxable personal property was transferred, by relocation of the owners, from Boston to eight suburban towns.[5]

In 1875 Boston's aggressive approach to revenue caused the first of ten tax commissions to study the property tax problem. Its conclusion: "From every quarter there are demands of change." [6] A principal complaint was that wealthy taxpayers were changing residence to where tax rates wer low, and administration of the tax casual. The commission blamed not only the law but the dishonest behavior of tax assessors and wealthy property owners:

> It is currently stated that persons of means, before taking their domicile in some towns, come to an understanding with the assessors as to the amount for which they shall be taxed... The truth is that the present system offers great temptations. A rich man, coming into a small town and building a handsome house there, adds in any case so much to its taxable resourses. The assessors have everything to gain and nothing to lose by attracting such men as residents.[7]

The report of subsequent tax commissions presented further evidence substantiating the relocation of wealthy taxpayers to "favored" towns, among them Weston. Besides Weston, the other towns cited were: Brookline, Cohasset, Dalton, Dover, Falmouth, Groton, Hamilton, Hopedale, Lancaster, Lincoln, Manchester, Milton, Nahant, Wellesley, Wenham and Westwood.[8]

> Between 1871 and 1891 not less than $75 million of personal estates assessed in Boston through the diligence of Mr. Hills were removed to fiften favorite towns. In the former year these towns had assessed $26,750,000 of personal property; in the latter their personal assessments had advanced to $52,558,000....[but] it would appear that the local assessors had taxed but one-third of these estates. In 1882, one town received an estate assessed in Boston at $800,000, and in the following year increased its assessment of personal property by no more than $281,000, but was able nevertheless to reduce its tax rate from $11 to $7 per $1000.[9]

A 1908 commission reported that by 1904, 17 towns, again Weston among them, had personal property valued at $66.9 million, 14 towns had $13 million, while the 300 and some other towns shared $41.9 million.[10] The per capita tax revenue from this personal property was an average of $13.11 for the 17 towns, $5.60 for the 14, and only $2.24 per capita for all the remaining.

Causing fiscal disparities among the cities and towns to be even worse was the manner in which the corporation franchise was distributed. In the mid-1800s, when the tax on Massachusetts corporations became a state tax, the revenue representing the former tax on shareholders was distributed to the towns in which shareholders were domiciled. This meant that when wealthy shareholders moved out of high tax cities and into suburban towns, they took with them not only their taxable intangible properties but their municipality's entitlement to state revenues from the corporate franchise. In 1905 the same wealthy towns, including Weston, had average per capita receipts from corporation taxes of $9.50 compared with $2.83 for Boston and $1.37 for all other cities. The result was notable fiscal disparities between the few favored towns and the rest of the state, a situation which worsened over the years.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Per Capita Local Revenue, 1865, 1885 and 1905
From Personal Property and State Corporate Excise Distributions

Personal Property	1865	1885	1905
14 Suburban Towns	$4.82	$9.24	$13.65
Rest of State	$5.00	$3.33	$ 3.73
Corporate Excise Distribution			
14 Suburban Towns	$2.05	$5.04	$10.36
Rest of State	$0.81	$1.15	$ 1.62

Source: *Massachusetts House No. 1150*, Report of Tax Commission, January 1908.

As serious as the problems were, Mr. Hills and the 1000-member assessors association which he headed strenuously fought proposals to change the way intangible property was taxed and instead supported state-wide enforcement of ful taxation. In 1908 two changes in state law made this almost feasible. The state adopted a direct inheritance tax, and during the same year, but in a separate context, the tax commissioner was given authority to supervise the performance of local assessors.The new inheritance tax meant that for the first time an inventory of a deceased taxpayer's estate was filed with the state tax commissioner. With his new authorization both to supervise assessors and to provide them with information that would assist them in the performance of their duties, the commissioner began the practice of distributing to local assessors the inventories the state gained from the inheritance tax records, inventories of detailed listings of previously concealed and undeclared personal holdings in taxable corporate stocks and bonds. The commissioner followed this with pressure for assessors to pursue taxpayers for their full tax liabilities.

Once again the effect of improved tax administration was not as expected. One unhappy result was evidence of residents' shifting property not only from cities to towns but outside of the state. At the same time, stepped-up city tax assessments further stimulated the migration to suburbs:

> Whenever the assessors in the ordinary city or town, acting upon the information furnished by the supervisors, increased materially the assessment of personal property, some favored town immediately acquired new inhabitants. The average rate of taxation in the state was gradually increasing from about $17 per $1000...but in the wealthy residential towns tax rates were often less than $10 per $1000 and valuations were low. [11]

By the time of the 1908 commission report, the problems of administering a property tax on intangible property had become so widely recognized that there was support even from Mr. Hills that a new tax approach be required; improved administration would not be the answer. The commission concluded that the fiscal advantages to the "favored towns" were so serious that "Unless a radical reform can be secured, a few communities are certain to grow richer, while the rest of the State, so far as the taxation of personal property was concerned, is bound to grow steadily poorer." [12]

Per Capita Assessment on Personal Property , Massachusetts, 1861 and 1905

	1861	1905
14 Suburban Towns	$432.36	$1,194.00
Rest of State	$247.55	$ 219.05

Source: *Massachusetts House No. 1150,* Report of Tax Commission, Janaury 1908.

Although solutions had been sought for many years, none were satisfactory. The exemption of intangible property from all taxes was too transparently inequitable, and because of the revenues that would be lost too impractical, and the Supreme Judicial Court rejected a proposed local 3-mill excise as unconstitutional. Other states struggled with the same issues, and finally Wisconsin solved the problem in 1911 by adopting a personal income tax. The income tax solution, which in retrospect appears so obvious, was not initially congenial with the state's politically conservative politicians. In 1911 the General Court rejected ratification of the income tax amendment to the U.S. Constitution, only voting for it in 1912 when the required number of states had already brought it into effect. But by 1915, with other options no longer available, and the evidence of tax evasion, inequitable impact, and the above discussed fiscal municipal disparities growing ever larger, there was widespread support and virtually no controversy.

In Massachusetts the adoption of an income tax required an amendment to the state's constitution. The day before the vote (November 2, 1915) *The Boston Evening Transcript* carried a front page ad featuring support for the amendment by "114 presidents or vice presidents of banks and insurance companies, 7 labor unions, 2 universities, 18 tax commissioners, 4 manufacturers, Mayor Curley and 3 judges." The vote was 73.4% in favor, with approval by every county in the state.

Although adoption of the state income tax, and the consequent exclusion of intangible property from the property tax, drew to a close the need for wealthy taxpayers to reduce their taxes on intangible properties by locating their homes in low tax suburbs, the towns chosen for this purpose during the previous 50 years have favored financial conditions that remain to this day. The state's local aid distributions are now designed with the intention of sending more state money to the cities and towns with the poorest local tax bases and less to the wealthiest. Weston and the other suburban towns no longer have the double benefit of proportional state distribution and their own strong tax bases. Still the essence of the observation of the 1908 tax commission continues to hold true:

> It is too clear for dispute that a low tax rate and a nominal assessment upon one's personal property are desirable and even indispensable adjuncts to the natural advantages which a town can offer prospective residents; and it is certain that a rigorous assessment...and a tax rate of $20 in the thousand will destroy the charm of the finest scenery in the Commonwealth. [13]

[1] Charles J. Bullock, "The Taxation of Property and Income in Massachusetts," The Quarterly Journal of Economics, November 1916, p.16.

[2] *Ibid.*, p.5.

[3] Massachusetts was the first to adopt a system to assure state financial support for the poor and mentally ill and the first to change the name of the agency providing this service from the State

Board of Charity to the Department of Public Welfare. Massachusetts initiated "aid for dependent children," to keep families intact 20 years before the federal program.

[4] Richard M. Abrams, A Conservatism in a Progressive Era, Massachusetts Politics, 1900-1912, Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1964.

[5] Bullock, p.16.

[6] *Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the expediency of revising and amending the laws of the Commonwealth relating to taxation,* October, 1875.

[7] *Report of Commission,* pp.65-66.

[8] The reporter noted that "In Dalton and Hopedale the concentration of personal property is due to the presence of large industries, and has come about in a perfectly legitimate way. In all the others large industries are conspicuous for their absence, and the concentration of personal property has come about in the manner described."

[9] Bullock, p.27.

[10] *House No. 1150, Report of Tax Commission,* January 1908, p.40.

[11] Bullock, p.36.

[12] House No. 1150.

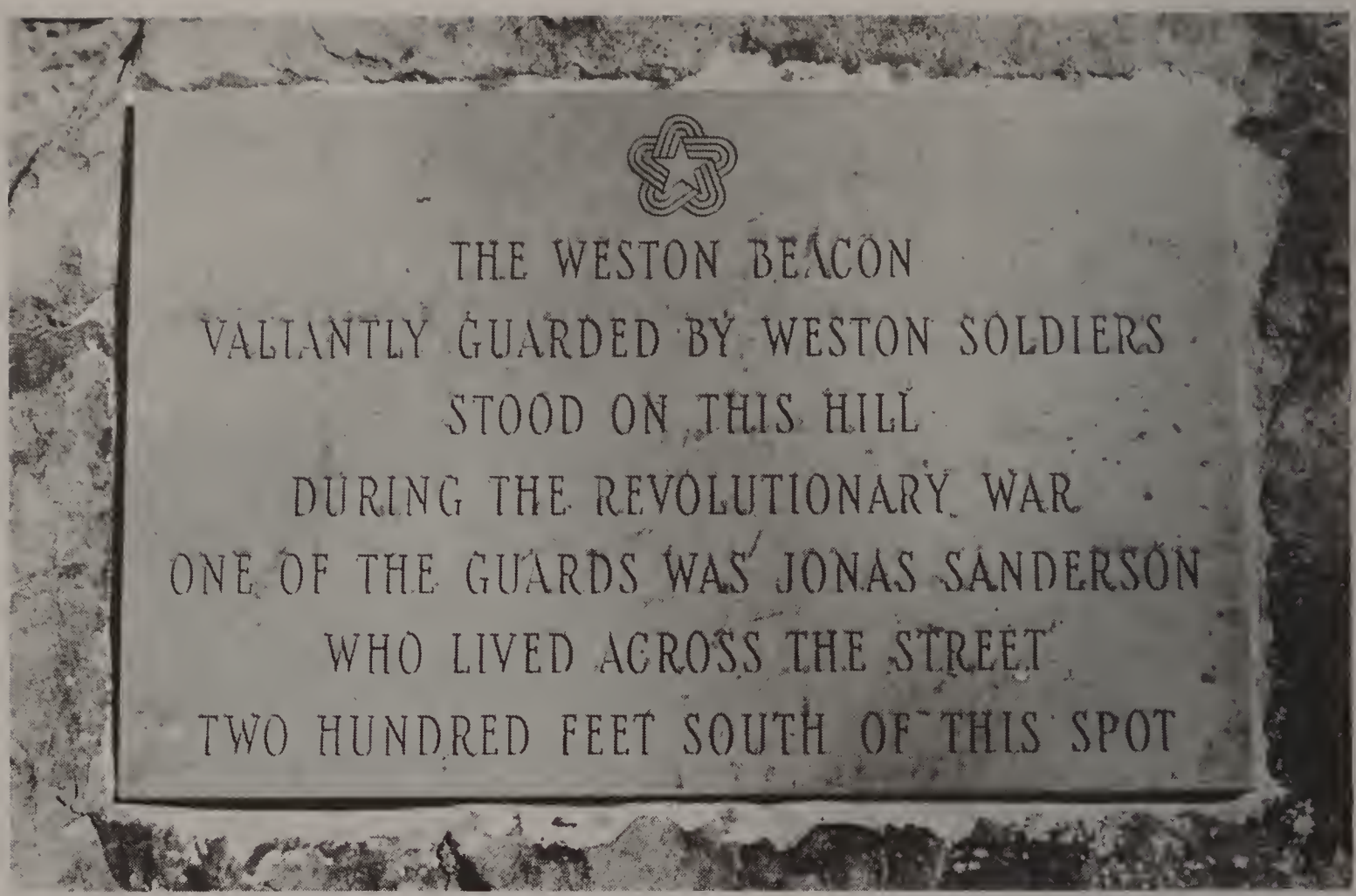
[13] *Ibid.*

Weston resident Deborah Stark Ecker's work on Massachusetts state and local fiscal policy issues has been with the League of Women Voters, as an official in the Department of Revenue, as a staff member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and as a member of the Weston Finance Committee.

ANNUAL MEETING OF 1995

The 32nd Annual Meeting of the Weston Historical Society took place at the Barn of the Josiah Smith Tavern on Wednesday, November 8, 1995. First on the agenda was the election of officers for the following year (see listing on the last page of this BULLETIN). The following directors were elected to three year tersm: Ned Downing, Pamela Fox, Martha Katz and William Martin.

Prior to the meeting, the directors of the Society and their spouses had entertained the speaker of the evening at a dinner at the Weston Golf Club. After the business meeting at the Barn, George Amadon introduced the speaker, Mr. Leonard Tucker, Director of the Massachusetts Historical Society, to a full house. The distinguished speaker delivered a fascinating lecture about the history and present status of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the first state historical society in the country, with the appropriate respected reputation, with its seat in Boston. Slides illustrated his narrative. We heard of the purpose and history of this institution and viewed slides of various items in the collection: manuscripts, books, furniture, paintings and other items accummulated throughout the two centuries of the Society. Among the illustration was an 18th century mahogany highboy, donated a few years ago to the Society by our late director, Brenton H. Dickson.



The Weston Beacon Marker

WESTON BEACON TOWER

In the last part of August, 1778, a battle damaged French fleet sailed into Boston Harbor. During a naval engagement with the British off Newport, Rhode Island, the combined fleets were lashed by a monstrous hurricane which further injured the ships that had suffered battle damage. His Christian Majesty's 90 gun ship LANGUEDOC, a flagship of Admiral of the Fleet Count Charles Henri Theodat d'Estaing, had been dismasted and had lost her rudder. The CESAR was severely damaged, her captain losing his right arm, and carried 60 dead and 100 wounded among her crew.

On April 13, 1778, the French king ordered that a fleet of twelve ships of the line and five frigates set sail for America, there to engage in battle with any British forces there under the command of Count d'Estaing.

Due to the poor condition of the fleet his first attempt at combat failed as his ships drew too much water to cross over the bar at the New York Harbor, in which the British fleet was anchored. His planned assistance in the American attack upon Newport was interrupted by the arrival of the British fleet from New York; the battle between them followed his arrival to Boston for repairs.

Major General William Heath of the Contenial Army, responsible for the defense of Boston, and Count d'Estaing became concerned for the safety of the French fleet, should a British squadron enter the harbor and attack. A defensive plan was established with the serviceable French warships to be anchored in the channel, Natasket Roads, and with cannon taken off some of the French ships, to be mounted on various islands which bordered the main channel into Boston. This potential firepower was thought to discourage any English attack upon the French fleet. In addition to the above, the militia of the surrounding towns were ordered to be prepared to march upon Boston, should an emergency occur.

To put the above plan in place, a series of signals were to be flown from the entrance of the channel at Hull, identifying any hostile ships entering the bay. Any signal of danger would notify the militia to march. Major General Heath, expanding this notification arrangement, developed a system of beacons that could be fired in case of attack by the British, calling out the militia.

The beacons were to be constructed on the Blue Hills, Malden and on a hill in Weston, on land formally called Coolidge's. This is just east of Highland Street, near Love Lane. There is a bronze plaque marking the nearby locaton of the beacon site. It is one of several markers in Weston referring to American history. The beacons were to be fired upon a signal from Beacon Hill.

I have found at the Massachusetts Historical Society among the Heath papers an order issued by the General as follows: "To Major Samuel Lampson, Weston, Massachusetts: You are hereby ordered and directed to detach from the militia of Weston a capable sergeant and men for the purpose of attending to the beacon in that town and to follow such orders as they shall receive from Major General Heath for that purpose." The only British attack stopped at Boston Light, leaving the French to set sail for the battle of Savanah in their restocked and refitted fleet.

George F. Amadon

George F. Amadon of Weston is a naval historian. The above article is part of the book he is writing, entitled *The Fleurs de Lis in America*.

POST SCRIPTUM I. TO THE FLAGPOLE

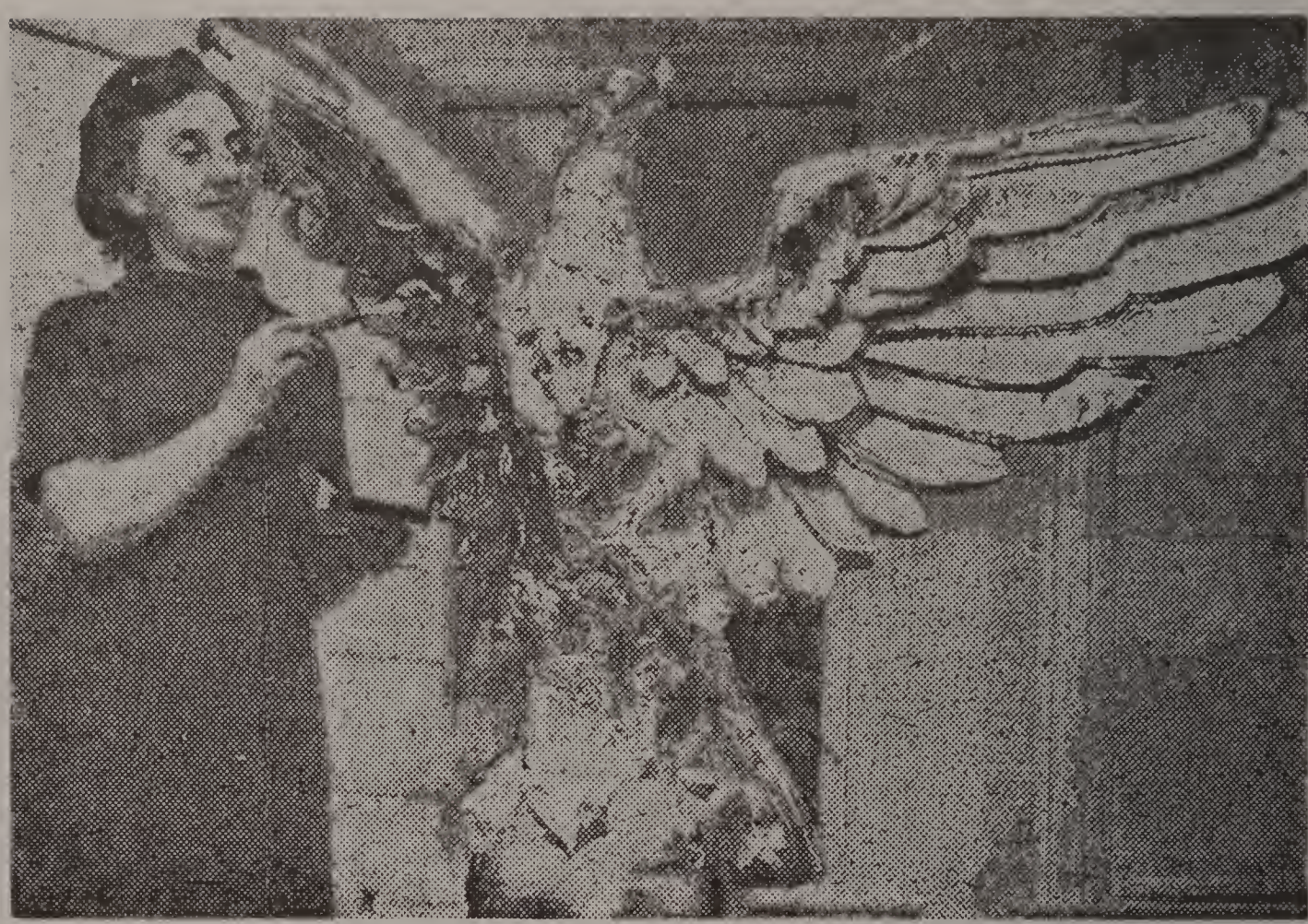
Mrs. Mary J. Gilligan of Waltham memorialized the new Weston flagpole of 1968 in verse:

A flagpole to some may be just a spar
Of seasoned timber; not so this premise.
A flagpole's spirit touches the stars
And its heart is host to hope and promise.

For craftsmen with art shape, taper its height,
Citizens dedicate it on the mall,
The colors are raised - a glorious sight,
Honoring veterans who heard country's call.

From deep in the forest the fir tree came;
Strong, resilient to serve liberty.
What greater gift than to be the frame
That hallows the standard of man's dignity.

A flagpole is watchguard to history,
For its staffs the flag of democracy.



Mrs. Theresa Raynard of West Peabody gold leafs the eagle atop new flagpole in Weston in 1968.

POST SCRIPTUM II. TO THE FLAGPOLE

When lightening struck the old flagpole on June 25, 1968, the eagle perching on its top literally flew off and landed on the soft turf, sustaining only minor injuries. Weston mythology has it that before hitting the ground, the eagle bounced off the late police lieutenant Larry Cugini's patrol car.

The E.B. Washburn Company of Danvers restored the eagle, and Theresa Raynard of West Peabody restored the gold leaf on it, in 23 carat gold, no less. That comes in three inch squares, at that time $50 for a box of 25. Weston's eagle has been "fluffed up" by almost 700 squares. Think of your tax money up there upon the high, when you next lift your eyes to our eagle.

Sam Payson

THANKS TO SABRA JONES

After three years of faithful and inspired service, Weston Historical Society President Sabra Jones stepped down from her office. Ms. Jones deserves the highest praise for her dedicated labors on behalf of the Weston Historical Society. Under her able leadership the Society flourished, the BULLETIN was revived, an active Museum Committee established. Sabra Jones acted as the energetic person she is, whether taking care of legal matters or getting down to the business of cleaning house at the Fiske Law Office. Her cheerful optimism was contageous and spurred on the rest of the directors and the membership. We are all grateful for her time, talents and energy, and wish her well both in her on-going law office in Weston and in her new home in Hopkinton, Massachusetts.

WESTON'S HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS

To dispell any possible confusion between the historical organizations in Weston, here are their statements of purposes: the Weston Historical Society's from its incorporation and two descriptions of purpose supplied by Pamela Fox for the two others. One essential difference is that the Weston Historical Commission is a town organ appointed by the selectmen, while the Weston Historical Society and the Golden Ball Tavern Museum are private organizations.

PURPOSE OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. AS STATED IN ITS ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS SECRETARY OF STATE UPON ITS INCORPORATION IN DECEMBER OF 1963

To gather, study, preserve, house and make available for use the records, relics and memorabilia relating to the history of the Town of Weston and its people, including current items which may become of historical interest in the future; and to disseminate information, particularly to the inhabitants of Weston in cooperation with its schools and otherwise, intended to promote greater understanding and appreciation of the history and traditions, both past and in the making, of the Town of Weston and its neighboring communities.

To receive donations and bequests to be used only to carry out the foregoing purposes of the corporation and to do all things along or in cooperation with other persons, associations, corporations or governmental agencies necessary or advisable to carry out any or all of the foregoing purposes and objects.

Provided, however, that no part of the net earnings or assets of the corporation shall be used except in the furtherance of the purposes for which it is formed and that no substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall be carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and no part of the net earnings or assets of this corporation shall inure, upon dissolution or at any other time or under any other circumstances, to the benefit of the incorporators or any member or director of this corporation or any other person except at reasonable compensation for services actually rendered in furtherance of its purpose, and provided further, that this corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or dissemination of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

*****

THE GOLDEN BALL TAVERN MUSEUM

The Golden Ball Tavern Museum at 662 Boston Post Road in Weston, is operated as a non-profit historic trust. The 1768 Golden Ball Tavern, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is one of the town's most important historic resources. The museum "peals back the layers" to show architectural, deocrative and social change which occurred over the 200 years that the Jones family occupied the house. The museum is operated as an educational institution which gives regularly-scheduled guided tours of the house and also sponsors lectures, workshops, and educational programs for Weston and other school groups, organizes training seminars, trips and special days such as "Tools and Trades," "Tavern Days," a "Harvest Festival" and an annual outdoor antique show.

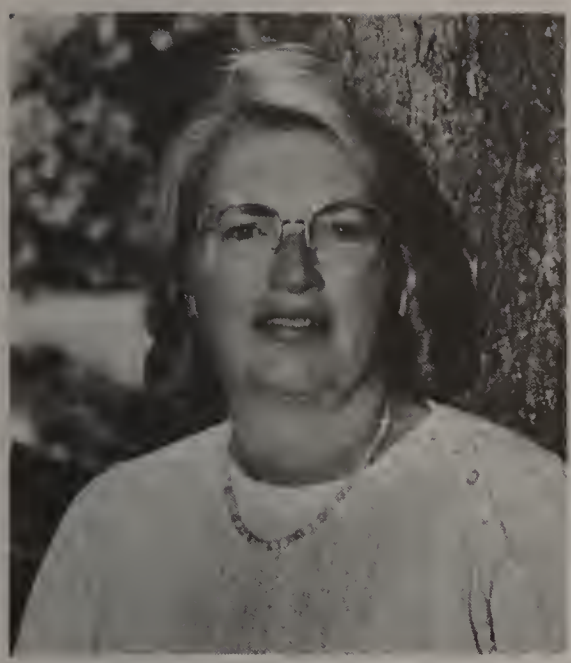
THE WESTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Weston Historical Commission, established in 1968, is an agent of local government. Its most important goal is the preservation of Weston's historic places. The purpose of the Weston Historical Commission is to work toward this goal by planning for and implementing programs for the indentification, evaluation, and protection of Weston's historic resources. For example, in 1993-94, the Weston Historical Commission conducted a comprehensive survey of Weston's historic buildings and neighborhoods.

Planning is the essential first step in developing an effective local preservation program. The historical commission works in cooperation with other municipal agencies to insure that the goals of historic preservation are considered in planning for future development of the community. The historical commission has been an active participant in local planning efforts of the Open Space Planning and Recreation Commission. It works with the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and other municipal and private bodies whose work impacts the town's historic resources.

The Weston Historical Commission also coordinates with other local groups—such as the Weston Historical Society, the Golden Ball Tavern Museum, the Weston Public Library, and the Lyceum—whose interests also involve history or historic preservation. The commission is involved in the "Access to History" project which is working to improve access to research materials in Weston. The commission has co-sponsored lectures along with the Weston Historical Society and Golden Ball Tavern Museum. In many cases, these activities have the common goal of fostering pride in community identity.

It is the local commission's mandate to be the municipal guardian for state and federal preservation agencies, alerting them to local preservation issues.



INTRODUCING: LEE C. MARSH

Our new president, Lee C. Marsh, first became interested in the history of Massachusetts when she visited Boston during Hurricane Carol in 1954 and retrieved a shingle from the original cupola on the Old North Church which had blown down during the storm. Her eighth grade history teacher in Indianapolis encouraged Lee to present the details of her travels on the Freedom Trail to her class, and a career in the teaching of history was begun.

Lee majored in history and minored in political science and economics at Vassar College; the "Vassar method" required long hours of research in primary source materials and the development of personal interpretations of history. In turn, Lee has encouraged her students in Longmeadow, North Reading, and Weston High Schools to pursue this approach which increases their appreciation of the study of history. Lee completed a master's degree in history at Boston College, taking several courses from Professor Thomas O'Connor who has contributed a great deal to the study of Boston history; Dr. O'Connor's letures frequently combine national issues with examples from local history, thereby giving his students an understanding of the history of the Greater Boston area.

Red Travis, a founder of the Historical Society, was one of the first Weston residents she met when she began teaching in Weston in 1969. Red invited her to become involved in the Society and took her on a tour of the major historical spots in town. Since this excellent introduction, Lee has studied the Hastings Organ Factory, the economic status of Patriots and Tories in revolutionary Weston, the records available for autobiographical studies by her students, and the nineteenth century news reports of Weston in the Waltham newspapers. She has been Editor of the Weston Historical Society BULLETIN, a member of the Society's Board, and a member of the town committee which planned the celebration of the 275th Anniversary of Weston. She has served as President of the New England History Teachers Association and given three presentations at New England Council for the Social Studies Conferences. Lee received an MBA degree with a specialization in the management of nonprofit organizations from Northeastern University. She looks forward to cooperation between the Historical Society and the schools in the community.

SAVE THE DATE!

The annual dinner of the Weston Historical Society will take place on Thursday, May 9, 1996 at the Student Union Upper Lounge of Regis College. Wine and cheese at 6 p.m., dinner at 6:45 p.m., lecture at 8:15 p.m. The speaker for the evening is the well known architect and critic Jonathan Hale, author of several books, his recent one being The Old Way of Seeing (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995, $24.95; paperback $14.95). The lecture will address the topic "The Old Way of Seeing: How Architecture Lost Its Magic and How to get it Back." Harvard's design expert John Stilgoe said about Hale: "Architectural magic intrigues Hale, not the mere sleight-of-hand effort that disgraces so many American cities today. Every client, every citizen determined to improve design, every architecture student ought to know this book."

See enclosed reservation slip.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

President: Lee C. Marsh
Vice President: Vera Laska
Secretary: J. Kenneth Bennett
Treasurer: Harold A. Downing
Assistant Treasurer: Alice Douglas
Corresponding Sec.: Joseph Sheehan, Jr.

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George Amadon
Peter Bacot
William Martin

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Sabra L. Jones
Martha Katz
Lee Marsh

FINANCE COMMITTEE
J. Kenneth Bennett
Alice Douglas
Harold Downing

MUSEUM COMMITTEE
George Amadon
Douglas Henderson
Vera Laska, Curator

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Joseph Sheehan, Jr.

EDITORIAN BOARD
Mary Maynard
Samuel Payson
Ned Rossiter
Joseph A. Verovsek
Editor of BULLETIN: Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individual $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 1996 Volume XXVII, No. 2

Carol and Ned Downing in colonial garb, with curator Vera Laska, on the opening day of the museum of the Weston Historical Society at the Josiah Smith Tavern, on Saturday, May 18, 1996. Photo by Andrew J. Laska.

WESTON AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

Historians describe the progressive era, from about 1900 through 1912, as a time of reform, a period in which private reformers and some politicians addressed, if they did not solve, the problems caused by the rapid growth of cities and industries. Did Weston, a town with a population of 1,834 in 1900, share in the spirit of the progressive era?

Weston leaders did initiate many of the improvements enjoyed by town residents today during the early years of the century, a time in which the selectmen and voters were dealing with the results of industrialization and the growth of metropolitan Boston. The following questions are samples of issues raised between 1899 and 1912: Should Central Avenue be taken as a state highway? Should the Waltham, Weston & Wayland Street Railway Company locate its tracks on Central Avenue? Should one-fifteenth of the town budget be spent on incandescent electric lamps for street lights? Should the speed limit of fifteen miles per hour for automobiles on country roads be established? Could the town keep certain roads free from automobiles altogether? Would Weston or the Charles River Reservation be forced to pay for fifty percent of the replacement cost of the bridge over the Charles River at South Avenue? Should Weston pay a high per capita charge into the Metropolitan Park System when there were "more than 5½ acres of land for every man, woman, and child in town?" Should Weston cooperate in the effort to annex the suburbs to the city of Boston? All these questions and more challenged town officials, just as similar ones challenged political leaders across the country.

Weston was changing. Although there were 1,012 cows and 502 horses in town in 1900, there were also six railroad stations for the eight miles of railroad track in town, which connected Weston directly with Boston and the rest of the continent. The Hastings Organ Factory was operating at its peak of production, sending high quality, custom-made organs to churches and halls across the United States. While Weston residents received benefits from their proximity to the Boston metropolis, they continued to be a community determined to maintain their identity and quality of life.

Weston residents did join in the progressive spirit of the times. Several "improvements" were proposed in little more than a decade. The selectmen and other residents petitioned the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1899 to establish a park at "Devil's Den," eighteen acres of land near the Stony Brook Station, which was "one of the most picturesque and attractive places in town." While the Commission took the matter under advisement, private negotiations continued and ended by establishing a stone quarry on the spot. In that same year, the town opened a new library, featuring an open shelf system to encourage "the public to make their own selections." The town reports for these years list each of the acquisitions of the library; the new facility allowed the acquisition of many volumes to meet the interests of library patrons, who read for both pleasure and self-improvement.

The town took its obligations to provide for the welfare of its residents seriously. In 1900 the Overseers of the Poor reported that the town-farm had been improved with the addition of a bathroom, two water closets, a new range, and a hot water boiler. The Overseers provided support at the almshouse that year for a 22 year old woman and her two year old daughter. The mother died after a two months stay, and the arrangements for the child are not recorded in the town report. Six hundred and sixty-four tramps stayed at the town-farm during 1900. The assessors valued the town almshouse buildings, equipment, and 68 acres of land at $6,000 in 1904, almost equal to the value of the

''Grammar School.'' Although the needy contributed to their support by working on the farm, the town did spend $640 supporting the poor in 1904. The Merriam Fund for the Silent Poor met the immediate financial needs of residents, such as shoes for school; the balance in the fund at the end of 1904 was $3,308. The town guaranteed hospital care for the needy by paying Waltham Hospital $745 in 1904 to maintain ''free beds.'' The selectmen determined under what circumstances a person could occupy a bed.

Improved public education was high on the list of priorities for the progressives. Charles ''Boss'' Eaton, Weston Superintendent of Schools, yearly urged students to improve their performance in school and encouraged parents to support high academic standards. In the 1903 town report, he noted the difficulties facing city schools: ''bad inheritance, poor environment, and lack of ideals in the home,'' while recognizing that ''in our town we have to combat this sort of thing little if at all, but we have our difficulties. . . . The greatest hindrance to the work in our schools is a lack of ambition. Our pupils are practically all well-fed and well-clothed. . . They have rarely felt the pinch of want, nor do they fear it in the future. Their parents provide well for them. . . They are often too self-satisfied, and are content with work that is only fairly good, instead of striving for the best. . . they should learn while still young to carry some responsibility for themselves. . .'' In 1904, Eaton urged the importance of education: ''Never, in the history of our country, has there been a greater need for education in order to succeed in life. . .'' With greater specialization of labor and improved standards for the professions, education was receiving attention across the country.

By 1912, the selectmen were taking on long-term projects for the benefit of the town. First, they planned to create ''the finest Town Common in Massachusetts,'' and to provide proper facilities, housing, and ''an automobile chemical engine'' for the Fire Department, while showing fiscal restraint in planning to move the existing Town-house rather than constructing a new, expensive building. Town leaders opposed bills introduced into the state legislature to annex surrounding towns to Boston and to create a Greater Boston Federation which would transfer control of local affairs from town government to some other ''instrument of government.''

Who was setting town policy during these years of change? Voters numbered 381 in 1900 and 479 in 1912, approximately 22% of the population. The statistics for the town included a category ''number of voters, women'' listing 1 for 1899, 2 for 1900, and 0 from 1901 through 1912. While the 1911 town report did note that bills granting suffrage to women in municipal elections and in town matters involving the appropriation of money had failed to pass in the state legislature, the town report is silent on local feeling on these issues.

How did the town relate to the national issues? Town voters supported the Republican point of view throughout this period. In 1900, the town voters supported McKinley, the Republican, with 203 of the 268 votes cast (76%). In the 1904 presidential election, candidates received the following totals: Republican [Roosevelt] 210 votes (76%), Democratic 51, Prohibition 13, and Socialist 1. It would be interesting to learn who cast this vote for the Socialist Party, a radical move in an upper and middle class community. While Wilson received more votes than any other presidential candidate in Massachusetts in the 1912 election, Weston voters remained loyal to the Republican party, splitting their votes in the following way: Republican [Taft] 46%, Progressive [Roosevelt] 33%, Democratic [Wilson] 20%, Prohibition 7% and Socialist 0%. The most prominent of

Republican leaders in this time was Theodore Roosevelt, president from 1901-1909 and candidate for the Progressive Party in 1912.

What were Roosevelt's values? He believed in hard work, the importance of individual character, the responsibilities of citizenship, and practical idealism. In an address to the Liberal Club in Buffalo, New York, in 1893, Roosevelt emphasized his belief that "every man must devote a reasonable share of his time doing his duty in the political life of the community. No man has a right to shirk his political duties under whatever pleas of pleasure or business. . ." The many volunteers, past and present, who make up town government and support local programs, exemplify Roosevelt's ideal. For example, in 1903 the town voted its appreciation of Oliver R. Robbins who had served the town as selectman, school committee member and, for thirty-one years, as library trustee. The town report notes that "the transfer of the Library to its new building and its subsequent growth and development and increased usefulness were largely due to his business sagacity, literary judgment, forceful methods and unsparing use of his time and energy . . .he was a fine example of that type of New England character that has made these towns renowned for their civic virtue and pure democracy." Several individuals served town government for years during this period, providing the continuity needed for the successful completion of large projects.

A believer in the "strenuous life," Roosevelt enjoyed every opportunity to be outdoors. As President, he took dramatic steps to conserve the forests of the country; he would surely have approved of the town's long-standing interest in conservation. Four national parks were created during his administrations; with 296 acres of parks within town boundaries by 1900, Weston had already taken its first steps towards conservation of open space.

When questioned about his reasons for selecting his social causes, Roosevelt replied that "concrete cases" aroused his interest. In a community of fewer than two thousand people, residents knew each other and had established social "safety nets" to deal with specific needs. The town's commitment to public education for all would have met with Roosevelt's enthusiastic endorsement because education provided the basis for future self-development.

A final example of the spirit of community throughout Weston in the early years of the century is the celebration of the town's bicentennial in 1913. The celebration committee, yet another group of volunteers, recommended three days of activities beginning with a Sunday "union service" of townspeople to be held at the First Parish Church. Monday was "to be devoted to the pupils in the public schools," with formal student presentations in the morning and an historical pageant and parade in the afternoon. Tuesday would feature athletic events and the major speeches and music, to be followed by a band concert and fireworks in the evening. The town had much to celebrate in the positive effects of the reform efforts of the previous years. Little did they know that the progressive era nationally was coming to an end and that the battlefields of Europe would dominate much thought and conversation in the future.

Lee Marsh

The sources for this article are the Weston Town Reports for 1899, 1900, 1092, 1903, 1904, 1911, 1912, and Dewey W. Grentham, ed. Great Lives Observed: Theodore Roosevelt (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1971, pp. 41-42.)

T.R. or T.Z.?

BULLY! TEDDY ROOSEVELT IS COMING TO TOWN!

RESERVE THE DATE: Wednesday, October 23, 1996, 8 p.m.
presented by the Weston Historical Society
at the First Parish Church in Weston
Free Admission & Refreshments

The man after whom the Teddy Bear is named!

The man about whom politico Mark Hanna said: ''That damned cowboy is but a heart-beat away from the presidency,'' when T.R. was ''kicked up'' to the vice-presidency in 1900!

The man who as police commissioner of New York personally chased the prostitutes off the streets!

The man who had overcome his frail physique by roaming the West!

The man who founded a third party and was beating his chest proclaiming that he felt like a Bull-Moose, thus adding a new animal to the political zoo of the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant!

The man who led his "Rough Riders" up San Juan Hill in the Spanish American War hollering: CHARGE!

The man whose diplomatic slogan was "Speak softly, but carry a big stick!"

The man who claimed that "I took Panama!"

The man who was our youngest president, wrote over two dozen books, won the Nobel Peace Prize, hunted lions in Africa, quarreled with the Pope, discovered a river in Brazil - we are running out of space!

This is one program you should not miss. If you do, you will later regret it. We let you in on the secret: the impersonator will be Ted Zalewski, who looks like T.R.'s twin, and is a nationally acclaimed performer and actor. Bring your friends and favored enemies, bring your children, and retreat into the fun and games of Teddy Roosevelt's times.

If you are ambitious to read up on Theodore Roosevelt, we recommend Edmund Morris' The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt (New York: Coward McCann, 1979), or David McCullough's Mornings on Horseback (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), the latter a super book but dealing only with the young T.R.

Vera Laska

REV. SEARS' "OTHER" CHRISTMAS CAROL

It is a well known fact that one of the most beloved of all Christmas carols, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," was written by a local minister. The author, Reverend Edmund Hamilton Sears, a distinguished scholar, preacher, author, and poet, served as minister at both the First Parish Church in Wayland (1838-1840, 1848-1866) as well as the First Parish Church in Weston (1866-1876). It was while he was minister at the Unitarian Church in Wayland in 1849 that he composed the now famous hymn for the Christmas Eve Service. With its universal message of "peace on earth, good will to men," the hymn has become known and loved the world over. (Queen Elizabeth II once quoted a stanza from it on a special Christmas Eve broadcast.)

Less well known, but thought to be equally as beautiful, is another Christmas carol written by Rev. Sears, entitled "Calm on the Listening Ear of Night." Oliver Wendell Holmes, a renowned poet himself, called it "The finest hymn in the English language." Below are the first and last verses of the text. It has often been a matter of controversy, however, as to just when this poem was written by Rev. Sears, and now, fortunately, the question has been answered.

This past winter, while rearranging some files in the age-old safe at the First Parish Church in Weston, I came across a small paper notebook. On the cover, in the familiar flourishing script used by Rev. Sears, was the title "POEMS on all subjects – and some others by Edmund H. Sears." This small gem of a notebook turns out to be probably the first book of poems written by Rev. Sears. All in his own beautiful handwriting, it begins on the inside cover with a poem simply called "Hymn" and was written, according

to Rev. Sears, "while digging a ditch in my father's meadow. I was 12 years old. I presume it was a curiosity – literally as I chalked it upon my hat at the time."

Most of the poems were written and dated in Sandisfield, Massachusetts, a small town in the Berkshires, where he was born (in 1810) and grew up. Others were written and dated while he was a student at Westfield Academy, Union College, and Harvard Divinity School – graduating from the latter in 1837. On the very last page is the greatest treasure of all. It is here where he jotted down the words to "Calm on the Listening Ear of Night," written while a student at Harvard.

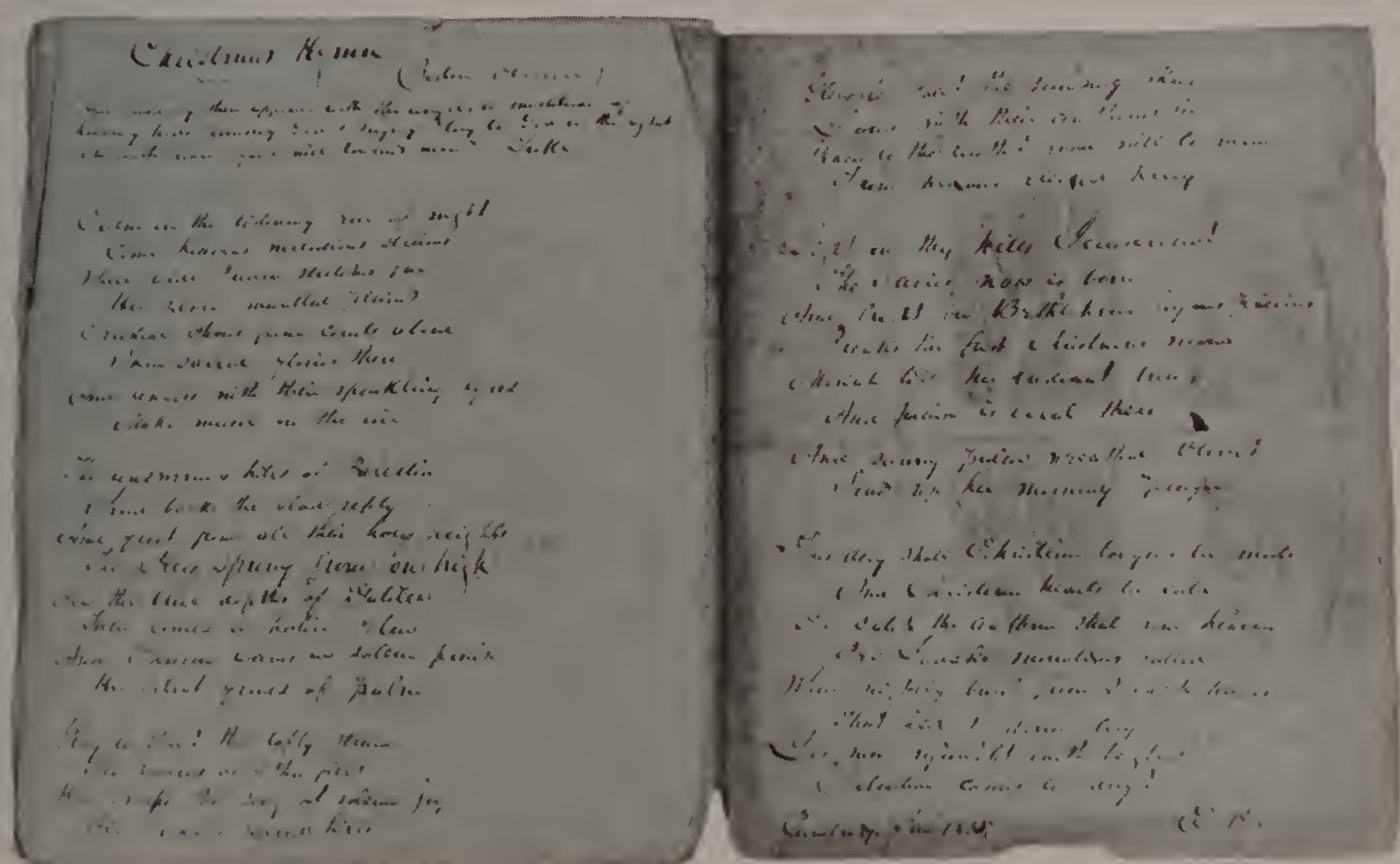
Thanks to the expertise of photographer Sarah Gilman, we now have some of the poems captured on film for all to see. In December, this charming little notebook, along with some other historical documents, will be on display in the Field Memorial Cabinet in the front vestibule at the First Parish Church. Stop by and have a look!

Mary Maynard

Calm on the Listening Ear of Night

Calm on the list'ning ear of night,
  Come heaven's melodious strains,
Where wild Judea stretches far
  Her silver mantled plains.

Light on they hills, Jerusalem!
  The Saviour now is born!
And bright, on Bethlehem's joyous plains,
  Breaks the first Christmas morn.



"Christmas Hymn" manuscrpit.

Photograph by Sarah Gilman

ARCHTECT SPEAKS AT ANNUAL DINNER

"Why do we love our old buildings and hate so many of the new ones? asked architect Jonathan Hale, the speaker at the Weston Historical Society's annual dinner at Regis College on May 9, 1996 and author of The Old Way of Seeing (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994). After President Lee Marsh's opening remarks, she asked member Joe Sheehan to introduce Hale. The nearly 75 members in attendance looked at slides of the beautiful and ugly in architecture as Hale explained his central point. "When you love an old house, there is a reason," he said. "The old houses have a visual music to them - harmonies of light and shade, proportion and shape, that draw us to them because they are lively, interesting and compelling."

He reiterated several times in his talk that today we have lost the old way of seeing. We no longer know how to look at our buildings; nor do we seem to care any more how they look. Our modernist priorities of convenience and function, or our need for symbols of status, have distractd us from the importance of the crucial visual patterns, which make a building lively and exciting. It is not that the styles are different or that the designers are inferior; modern architecture can be very beautiful. We no longer demand beautiful buildings because we have ceased to be aware of our visual environment. We need to recapture the visual awareness our forbears had of what makes a building beautiful.

Hale's was a powerful message to all of us in Weston to take stock of our surroundings. Are we doing enough in this town to preserve the best of our old buildings and make sure the new ones are beautiful? How do we recapture the old visual standards? We all know how easy it is to tear down the old buildings and how difficult to maintain them. We also know it is easier to forget than to remember.

The relentless pace of change in modern life tends to obliterate the past and to leave us with "dullness" and "mismatched systems." Amidst a building boom, the new MWRA water tank project, concern for open space, and controversy over the new Title 5 septic regulations, so threatening to our old houses, many people in Weston share Hale's concerns, and his talk was an inspirational reminder to us that an awareness of being rooted in time and place reinforces our sense of belonging to an important heritage. The more we look ahead, the more we must look to the past to anchor our efforts to make the difficult choices we face about the future of the town. Architecture is a visual means of telling our story because those old houses and barns do have stories, and represent an important part of the town's history, helping us define ourselves and reaffirm our traditions.

Ned Rossiter

Weston resident Ned Rossiter is Chairman of the Department of History at Newton North High School. He is also a member of the Weston Historical Commission.

PRESERVING WESTON'S PAST

Welcome action is being taken to restore some of Weston's most treasured old buildings. We all know that the Josiah Smith Tavern at 358 Boston Post Road, where our museum is located, is in very bad condition, and the selectmen have begun tentative, preliminary discussions with the Historical Commission, a six member appointed body under the chairmanship of Al Aydelott, to begin thinking about a proposal for restoration. Current thinking is to turn over the Josiah Smith Tavern restoration to the Town Buildings Committee under its new chairman, Bill Helm, for the needed capital improvements. The Weston Historical Commission is also struggling to rescue from the wreckers a lovely old white house at 449 North Avenue on the corner of Lincoln Road. A developer wants to tear it down to build something new and almost certainly less beautiful.

Most in need of repair is the old Isaac Fiske Law Office at 626 Boston Post Road, built ca. 1805, which has been on the agenda of the Historical Society for thirty years. This little architectural gem reminds us of everything that Jonathan Hale said at the annual meeting of the Historical Society in May at Regis College. Here is a building of classic simplicity and grace. Its beautifully proportioned lines, the symmetry of the front facade, and its setting embody Hale's notion of "visual music." Similar small, one or two room structures, which served as law offices, dot the New England landscape. Many of them were lovingly described by Harold G. Travis in a past issue of this Bulletin (Vol. IX, No. 1, Oct. 1972).

The Fiske Law Office served as the headquarters of the Weston Historical Society for several years and over the years the Historical Society has labored heroically to maintain the building. Historical Society Bulletins of the late 1960s frequently refer to the volunteer restoration efforts. We read of "lady volunteers stripping wall paper," while "still others removed layer after layer of paint from door sills and frames. Happy voices rang out above the roar and racket." (Vol. VI, No. 4, May, 1970.) How times have changed. Does anyone have the time and motivation to do this kind of volunteer work any more?

In spite of all these efforts, once agine the Fiske Law Office is in an advanced stage of decay, and the selectmen and the Historical Society have agreed recently to turn the building over to the Historical Commission to undertake repairs and find a suitable use for the building. Decendents of Isaac Fiske, who sold the law office to the town in 1928, remain deeply concerned about its condition.

The Historical Commission is presently assessing the extent of the restoration work needed on the Law Office and seeking out bids for major structural repairs and a new septic system. The town is funding this project, but no significant work can be undertaken until there is a clearer vision of the future for the building. Commercial use as a small business, or as an active law office once again, or civic use, or even use as a dwelling, are all possibilities.

The important work to be done preserving our old buildings so cherished by Jonathan Hale, while clearly beyond the means of the Historical Society alone, is very much part of its mission. So many of the Society's members have such a wealth of information and experience that their input would be vital to any successful restoration efforts on the part of other town agencies or committees. Members are urged to stay involved.

Ned Rossiter

A version of this article appeared in the Town Crier on June 16, 1996. Thanks to Pam Fox for her assitance in preparing it.

Sam Payson as premier danseur in the song and dance "I Love a Livery Stable," in the 1956 production of "Never Walk Alone." The others are: unidentified lady, Bill Wolf, Bob Fisher, Jane Wolk, Tom Scott and Ginny Scott.

"NEVER WALK ALONE"

An Original Weston Musical Production or Reminiscences of a Not Too Adept Dancing Boy

Rumaging around our attic, I came across some photographs of one of the Weston Friendly Society's original musical productions, called "Never Walk Alone." They brought back sweet memories.

The Friendly Society certainly ranked high in Weston entertainment. "Never Walk Alone," written and produced by Frank Hatch and Harry Patterson in 1956, was just one of several musicals produced in that era. Weston had about half the population that is has today.* Route 128 was in the process of being constructed, and the Massachusetts Pike extension was an idea on paper. Weston was a quiet country town, with much fewer activities than now. Thus when a musical was put on, as it was every three years, there was intense enthusiasm, and many people got involved.

The plot of "Never Walk Alone" evolved around Concord in the days of Henry Thoreau. An important cog in the cast was a girls' and boys' dancing chorus. Prior to this, I had been active in singing choruses, mostly of the Gilbert and Sullivan variety; so why not be a dancing boy? I found the idea intriguing. So with daring I tried out for this group and, to my surprise, was accepted.

Rehearsals took place in the First Parish Hall and in March moved to the second floor of the Town Hall. There was much enthusiasm and much confusion what with members of the cast, property committee, costume, lighting and program committee. Then there was the long suffering rehearsal pianist. Before the dress rehearsal, there were two Sunday rehearsals, the whole musical being run through several times with the professional orchestra.

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*10,200 according to the 1990 U.S. census, ed.

In the dancing chorus, there were five girls and five boys. It was strenuous work with many lifts and leaps, but it was good fun. Yours truly distinguished himself by fainting, sustaining a bloody nose, and to top it all losing his pants doing a leap, luckily only at the dress rehearsal. A quick curtain was followed by a hasty stage repair.

There were three performances. Thursday night was a benefit for the Waltham Hospital; Friday and Saturday evenings many in the audience came all dressed up, the ladies in their evening gown fineries, the men in their dinner jackets. The chorus was strictly admonished; disaster or not, just keep smiling – and we did.

Following the final performance, there was a cast party for all participants of the show in Ritz and Barbara Rice's home off the Boston Post Road. It started at midnight and ended not in the wee hours but around seven in the morning. Gifts were presented to those responsible for the success of the show. There was much singing, and the dancing chorus repeated its routines over and over. This time I kept my pants on. Needless to say, *spiritus fermenti* flowed freely and many a head was woozy the following day. A few diehards prolonged the party until nine in the evening on Sunday at a house on Sudbury Road.

There was oh! so much camaraderie among the members of the dancing chorus that we had at least three more gatherings at various members' houses before the beginning of the summer. If memory serves me right, some members of that famous chorus still live in Weston: Ginny and Tom Scott, Jane and John Paine, Pug and Tony Morse and Carter Crawford.

Samuel R. Payson

BURIED WITH A FAITHFUL COMPANION

We bring you this truly unique photograph from the annals of Weston. Henry Viles is shown as he says his last farewells to his brother Jay Viles, 45, who had been killed in a highway accident on Route 117 on June 29, 1991. With ultimate brotherly understanding, Henry buried his brother's beloved motorcycle along with his brother's coffin in Linwood Cemetery in Weston. Henry and Jay Viles's parents were the Weston teacher Mary Viles and the erstwhile police chief Sumner Viles. (ed. Photograph courtesy of Town Crier.)

MEMORIAL DAY 1996

Remarks of George F. Amadon, organizer of the 1996 Memorial Day ceremonies:

We meet today to embrace old fashioned values. We are honoring our veterans who have died, were wounded, and served in our armed forces in order to bring peace and tranquility to our daily lives. We also honor those who waited, worked and prayed for the safe return of their loved ones. We also remember on this day our loved ones and friends who are forever gone from us.

This is the 117th Memorial Day celebration in the town of Weston. The first official celebration took place in 1879, when the town cornet band was paid forty dollars for their appearance. Now it is not a cornet band but the high school band that plays, and our thanks go to Ronald Morri, the conductor of this band, for his services to the town in the 26th year that he has lead the band on Memorial Day. The first unofficial Memorial Day was celebrated on April 25, 1866 in Columbia, Mississippi, but it was not until 1868 that it was set for the last Monday in May.

We gathered here this morning to honor the men and women of the army, navy, air force and marines who have given their lives in battle, defending our world against aggression and to let the world know that they will never be forgotten. They lost their lives in distant places: at Gettisburg, Louisbourg, San Juan Hill, in the air over Tokyo and beneath the North Atlantic. Nor have we forgotten Korea and Vietnam.

There are contained battles in our world again, but we hope that by the grace of God we will be spared another war.

David H. Bradley was the guest speaker. He is a veteran in naval aviation and a long time real estate broker in Weston.

He focused his address on three key words: hero, freedom and peace. "The true definition of a hero is one who performs a noble and courageous act. Heroes can be found among us every day. . . every major world event that has occurred in this century has been for freedom." The fall of the Berlin Wall and the student stand at Tienanmen Square were cited as examples. "A society only works well when its members are free." He pointed to the troubles found in many third world countries.

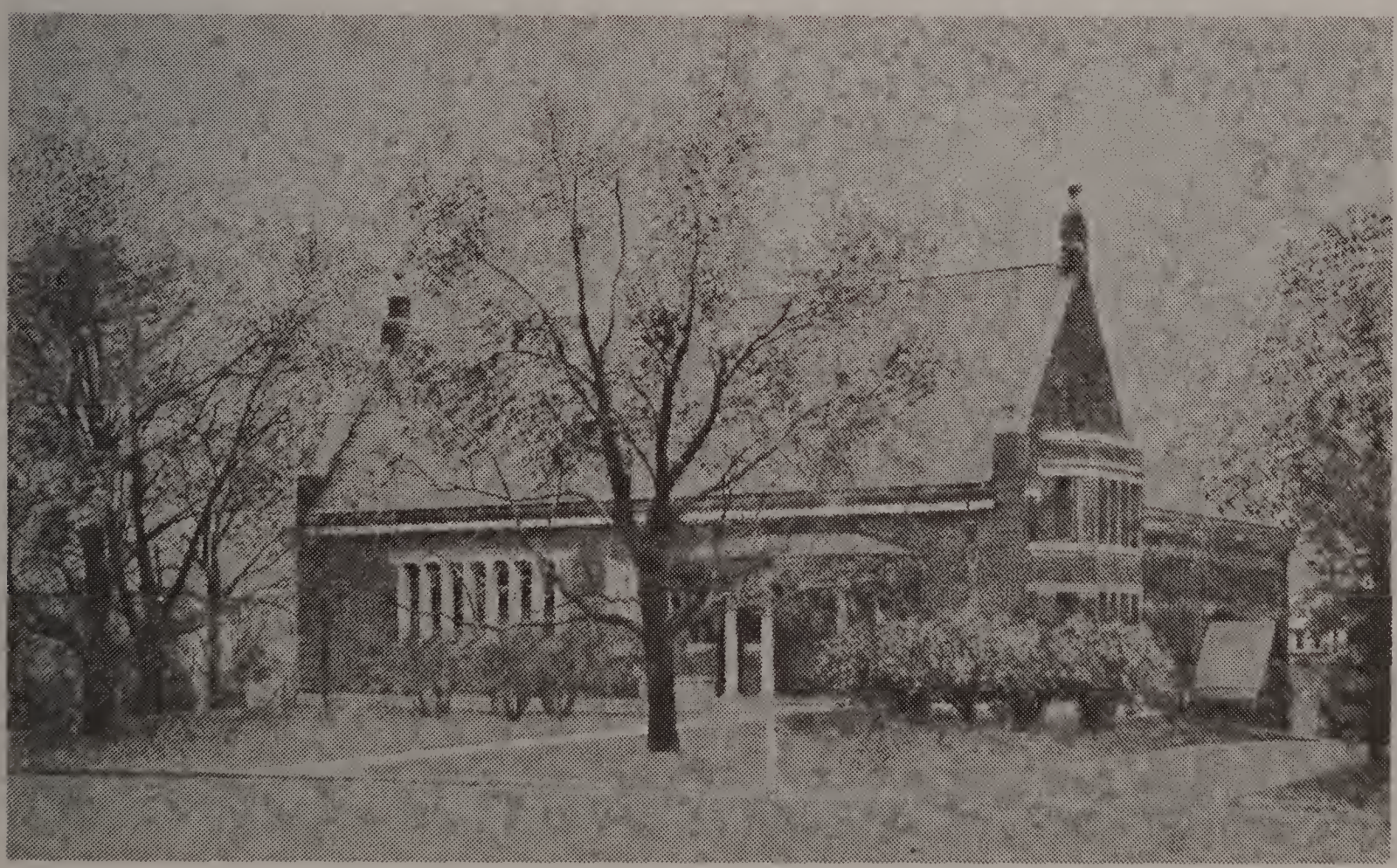
Mr. Bradley concluded by stating, "Memorial Day is a holy day. Bodies are buried in the name of peace. Today is truly a day of remembrance."

George F. Amadon

NOSTALGIC VIEWS OF WESTON YESTERYEAR

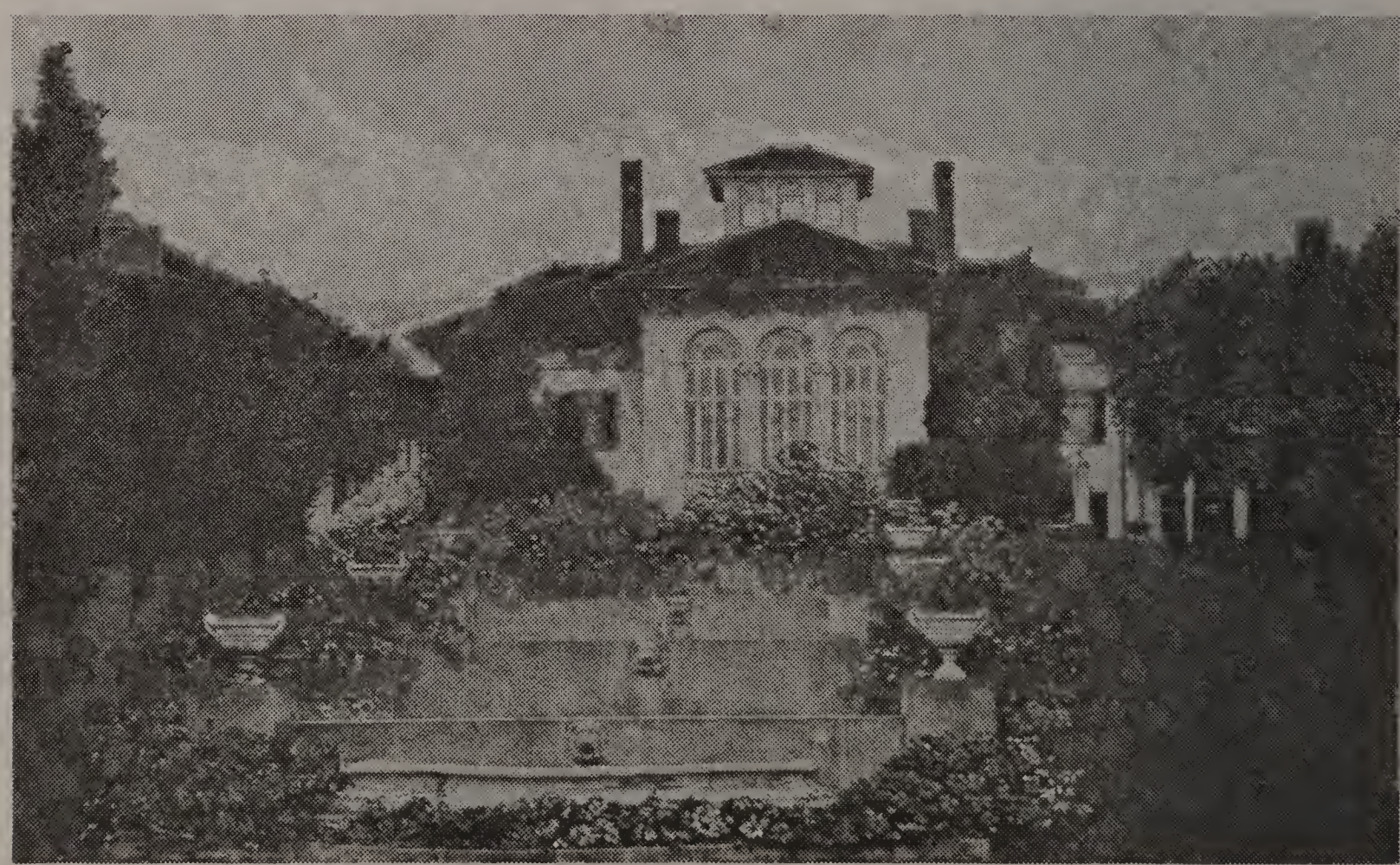
Available at the Museum for $1 each or three for $2.

The First Parish Church.



The Old Public Library.

North View of the Horace Scudder Sears Mansion on the Boston Post Road; it has been torn town.



South View of the Horace Scudder Sears Mansion and Gardens.

The Hastings Organ Factory at Kendal Green; no longer standing.

Drabington Lodge at Kendal Green, now the Westonian Retirement Residence.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF OUR MUSEUM

On Saturday, May 18, 1996 the newly organized museum of the Weston Historical Society was opened. It was a great success, with over one hundred people dropping in to view the several exhibits in the two rooms at the Josiah Smith Tavern at 358 Boston Post Road. On the same day the garden club had its flower sale in front of our building and thus provided a most colorful framework to our museum.

The first room now contains five exhibit cabinets that hold various artifacts from Weston's history, among them ladies' embroidered handbags, toys, old bottles and pre-Columbian stone implements. The second room is a faithful replica of a nineteenth century living room with refinished fine furniture, among them a cabinet with glass and China ware.

The one hundredth visitor on opening day was Mrs. David Swan of 11 Brenton Road, who received as a prize Brenton H. Dickson's Once Upon a Pung. Ann and David Swan moved to Weston from California last fall.

Our thanks go to the many helpers, all volunteers, who contributed to the success of the day. In preparation for the museum opening they were Jean Jones, Pam Fox, Andrew Laska, and most of all Charles Marsh, truly a master of all trades, without whose know-how we would have been lost. On opening day we were fortunate to have the assistance of Carol and Ned Downing, who manned a booth with colonial games, and Meredith Lightbown, Judy Gaughan and Jane Abbott, who as hostesses helped with refreshments. George Amadon and Joe Sheehan, Jr. took care of publicity.

We also wish to acknowledge the friendly help we received in minor emergencies from the Central Tailoring Company, Florentine Frames, and as always from Bill Livingston of Nobb Hill Press, all of Weston. Dragon Bookstore kindly accommodated our poster, as did the Cambridge Trust Company, both in Weston.

AUTUMN MOOD IN WESTON

The shadows are longer, the trees are still,
The setting sun and the autumn chill.

A time of foreboding, yet a time of grace,
A time for reflection for the human race.

Geese low overhead, black night in the west,
Each voicing its preference of a place for rest.

George F. Amadon

INTRODUCING DOUGLAS HENDERSON

Douglas Henderson was born on Chestnut Street in Weston on October 15, 1914, the fifth of seven children. He attendend Weston public schools and graduated in 1932. He matriculated at Boston University in the fall of 1936, on a scholarship sponsored by Hiss Helen Green, a Weston High School teacher. In the spring of 1940 he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and graduated magna cum laude. He continued his studies at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, on a Buck Fellowship granted by Boston University, and received his Master of Arts degree in the spring of 1941.

He entered the Foreign Service of the United States in February 1942, and was first assigned to the American Consulate in Nogales, Mexico. His subsequent assignments were: officer in charge at American Consulates in Arica, Chile and Cochabamba, Bolivia; consultant on financial affairs in the American Affairs Branch of the International Affairs Office of the Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.; economic and financial specialist at the American Embassy, Berne, Switzerland; assistant chief in the Economic Policy Division, Department of State, Washington, D.C.; Economic Counselor and then Charge d'Affaires at the American Embassy, Lima, Peru; U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia; and U.S. Representative to the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress of the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C.

He retired from the Foreign Service in 1974 after thirty-three years of service and returned to his family home in Weston in June, 1975. He has been involved in various civic activities in Weston since that time, including memberships on the Boards of Directors of the Weston Historical Society, the Weston Forest and Trail Association and Land's Sake. He is also a member and past president of the Ambassadors' Council of the World Affairs Council of Boston and member and past president of the Foreign Affairs Retirees of New England.

He is the father of six children by his first wife, Dorothy Henderson [sic] Henderson, who died in 1968, and has six grandchildren. He now lives with his wife Marion English Henderson in the family home on Chestnut Strteet where he was born. Doug Henderson is a volunteer in our museum in charge of documentary materials.

VOLUNTEERS AT THE MUSEUM

The museum of the Weston Historical Society functions under the curatorship of Dr. Vera Laska. There are two important sections in the museum: the documents in manuscript form, which are in charge of Douglas Henderson, and the photographs, in charge of George F. Amadon. The hundreds of photographs are a great treasure but also a cause of much frustration because a large portion of them lack any notation of people or places they represent. Lately we were fortunate in getting significant help from Pam Fox who is setting up a system for the cataloguing of the photographs, with the assistance of Sally Gilman. Our heartfelt thanks to these volunteering ladies.

Curator Laska finished putting our library in order, compiling two full sets of all our Bulletins, preparing a stand with permanent multiple exhibits and taking care of the current business of the museum. Planned activities are indexing all Bulletins, cataloguing the books and preparing more "pages" for the multiple exhibits.

We would welcome a few more volunteers who could give us two hours, Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (We are closed when the schools are closed.) If you think that you could help us out, please call Vera Laska (237-1447).

REWARDS FOR YOUR DETECTIVE WORK

If you come in some Wednesday morning and manage to identify people or places in our photographs, you will be rewarded; for the identification of three (3) photos by the charming book on Weston history Once Upon a Pung; for identification of six (6) photos by the book One Town in the American Revolution; for the identification of 10 photos by one of the above books plus a one year membership to the Weston Historical Society.

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Membership dues: Individual $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.

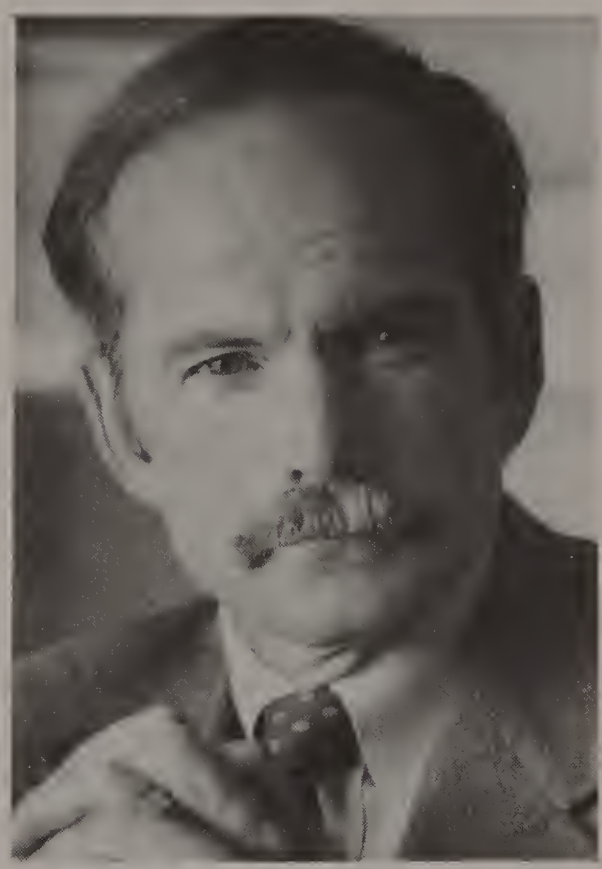
THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 1995 Volume XXVI, No. 1

IN MEMORIAM

Alice Cutter Tyler Fraser,
Honorary Director Of The Society,
July 24, 1903 - February 14, 1995
We Shall Miss You!

(see "Remembering" on page 17.)



Jack Beatty

"HIZZONOR" AMONG US

November 15th, 1994 was a memorable day for us at the Weston Historical Society. First the directors participated in a dinner at the Weston Golf Club, then at the "Barn" of the Josiah Smith Tavern we were truly treated to an intellectually witty talk by Jack Beatty, author of THE RASCAL KING: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMES MICHAEL CURLEY (1874-1958).

Curley certainly had a checkered career. Son of Irish immigrants, he used the church as a springboard to politics. He was among others Congressman from Massachusetts, thrice mayor of Boston and once governor of the Commonwealth. We all know about his term in jail, yet that did not much diminish his fame among the local patriots.

In a way, he is still in Boston, this "Rascal King." He sits on a bench in a downtown park, with space enough for residents to join him and reflect next to his seated statue.

He lived and he departed from life in style. His funeral was quite a show. He lay in state not in City Hall but in the Hall of Flags in the State House; 100,000 mourners filed by his catafalque and an estimated one million people lined the streets to watch the hearse of "Hizzonor" pass by to its final resting place.

The subject of the talk was a super-colorful figure, and the speaker did him justice with his flowery language. It was a sheer and undiluted joy listening to Jack Beatty, as he described Curley, who lived ten men's lives, who was a mayor of the poor with the taste of an aristocrat, who never stole from anybody who could not afford it, who depicted a politician as "14 ounces lighter than a straw hat."

His private life was tragic. He burried his first wife and all but two of his seven children. He married again, and both his marriages were happy ones.

We need more lively speakers as Jack Beatty!

Vera Laska

The annual dinner of the Weston Historical Society will take place on Thursday, May 11th, 1995 at Regis College: wine and cheese at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. and speaker at 8 p.m. Northeastern history professor William Fowler will discuss the history of Boston harbor. See included flyer.

WESTON RESIDENT ROBERT WINSOR
THE "J.P. MORGAN OF BOSTON"

By the turn of the century, Weston was changing from an agricultural community to a highly desirable residential area attractive to successful Boston businessmen, who purchased large tracts of farmland and established estates which they operated as "gentlemen's farms."

One of the most important of these businessmen was Robert Winsor, described at his death as "the J.P. Morgan of Boston." In the thirty-five years from 1883 to 1918, he amassed the second largest estate in Weston, purchasing over 472 acres including most of the land in the Meadowbrook Road area. He is important to Weston history not only as a major estate owner infuential in town affairs but also as one of the first estate owners to plan for the development of his large land holdings. By attracting the Weston Golf Club to his property in 1917, he initiated the transformation of hundreds of acres of farm fields and woodlands into the present prime residential community.

Robert Winsor was born in 1858 in Salem, Massachusetts, the oldest of seven children of Dr. Frederick Winsor (1829-1889) and Anne B. Ware Winsor (1830-1907). His father, a beloved physician, practiced in Salem and later in Winchester. His maternal grandfather, Henry Ware, Jr., was a well-known Unitarian minister and anti-slavery advocate. His brother Frederick was founder and long-time headmaster of Middlesex School in Concord, and his sister, Miss Mary Pickard Winsor, was founder and for many years director of the Winsor School for girls in Boston.

After preparing for college at Phillips Exeter, Winsor graduated from Harvard in 1880. A "keen student" and all-around athlete, he played for three years on the varsity football team and was captain of the baseball team in his senior year. Immediately after graduation, he secured employment at the investment bank Kidder, Peabody & CO. as an office boy at a salary reported in one account to have been $100 a year and in another to have been under $1000.

In 1883, Winsor married Eleanor May Magee of Winchester, and the young couple built the house still standing at 309 Boston Post Road, corner of Hemlock Road. The shingle style house was the first in Weston designed by the young architect Samuel Mead.

The story of how Winsor came to settle in Weston is told in part in an 1883 letter from Horace Sears to Andrew Fiske in which he describes Winsor as a "great gain". Sears continues:

> He is a young fellow about my age who is in Kidder, Peabody & CO's employ & whose connections are of the very best ... He has not much money I judge & has built a little box of a house but that makes no difference. I am sure you will like him & I am rejoiced that he came to Weston, being attracted there thro' Mr. Russell, who is an old friend of the family. Winsor was married about two weeks ago to a very charming girl & only came to his new house last week. He could not find a lot upon which to build at any reasonable price & we were so anxious to secure him that Mother bought all the Davis pasture containing about 20 acres next to our land & sold him a lot there.

Deeds indicate that Sears' account is not precisely correct, and that in 1883 Winsor purchased nineteen acres directly from Hollis and Hannah Davis, for $2,000. The first Parish Church, of which "Mr. Russell" (Rev. Charles F. Russell) was minister, was to benefit greatly from Winsor's settlement in Weston, as Winsor would become one of the church's most prominent supporters. This was a period of reorganization and consolidation in American industry, and Winsor was a leading figure in this process. A newspaper article published just after his death discusses the distinguished Harvard Class of 1880, which included Theodore Roosevelt:

> Perhaps Robert Winsor was the greatest of the '80's great young men, at least in the business world... He conceived great projects... Winsors had the insight that saw the transportation needs of the last four decades. He saw the needs of and the demand for illuminating and heating gas. He saw the demand for communication... Robert Winsor saw these things. He grasped their importance and he... found the men to develop them. Not only did he find the men, but he found the money, millions of money, for the developments.

His first "coup" was the reorganization, with classmate William A. Gaston, of the old West End Street Railway into the Boston Elevated Railway Company. Winsor merged several greater Boston gas companies into the Boston Consolidated Gas Company. He and Gaston consolidated nine existing banks to establish the National Shawmut Bank, one of the largest banks in New England. Winsor and his firm became the representative of the Morgan interests in New England. He was involved in the financing of the expanding AT & T and United States Steel Companies. He served as a director of dozens of companies and for a time exerted strong influence in the affairs of three large New England railways. Under Winsor's leadership, Kidder Peabody developed from an eminently respectable investment bank of little more than local influence to one of the greatest banking institutions in the world. His obituaries describe his "forceful personality and constructive mind" and his "far sightedness, broad vision, ability, conscientiousness and natural leadership." Several articles note Winsor's modesty and dislike of personal publicity.

With business success came financial properity, and Winsor began purchasing additional property in Weston. In 1887, he aquired two parcels at the souteast corner of Wellesley and Boston Post Road for a total of 18 acres. By 1890, he had laid out a right of way, now the first few hundred feet of Winsor Way, and built the two houses which are now numbered 1 and 10 Winsor Way. Research suggests that one of these houses, the present 1 Winsor Way, was built for his widowed mother in 1893. That year, the Weston directory lists five of Winsor's siblings - Mary, Annie, Elizabeth, Frederick, and Jane - living with their mother at the corner of Central Avenue and Wellesley Street.

In 1895, Jane Winsor married Lyman Whitman Gale, and the couple built the house still standing at 22 Conant Road. By 1900, all of the siblings had married except Mary, who continued to live on Winsor Way at least until her mother's death in 1907. Winsor's brother, Paul, and his two sons, Paul and Felix, lived next door at this time as well.

Line drawing of the Winsor estate mansion (built ca. 1901-3, demolished 1946). (Photo courtesy of Elise Winsor Palmer)

Aerial view of the Winsor estate mansion, which stood on the site of the present Canadian Consulate at 63 Winsor Way. (Photo courtesy of Elise Winsor Palmer)

In 1894, Winsor was admitted into partnership at Kidder, Peabody. Four years later, in 1898, he made his first large land purchase, the 83 acres commonly known as the Bryden Farm, for which he paid $24,000. The farm included much of the land which was to become the Weston Golf Club, along with the farmhouse which still remains at 279 Meadowbrook Road, and the cow barn which was to become the core of the present Weston Golf clubhouse.

By 1903, Winsor owned 185 acres, including the site at 63 Winsor Way where he built his estate mansion, known as "Chestnut Farm." The mansion, thought to have been built about 1901-1903, was demolished in 1946. Described as "a beautiful estate, where comfort, not lavishness, is the keynote," the 2½ story shingle Tudor house was shaped like a W, with picturesque gables facing in all directions. The site was accessible from a winding driveway extending the length of the present Winsor Way and Bryden Road. The garage was later remodelled into a house at 4 Bryden Road. A fieldstone and shingle outbuilding known as the "duck house," probably built about the same time, still stands at 283 Meadowbrook Road and once overlooked a pond, which was drained about 1926 when the duck house was converted into a residence. Two other converted estate buildings are located at 4 and 8 Hidden Road, the latter a converted chicken coop.

The main estate mansion reflected Winsor's properity and also accommodated his growing family, which numbered six children including four who survived into early adulthood: Robert Jr. (1884-1944), Philip (1893-1918), Alexander ("Sandy," 1894-1966), and Mary P. ("Bud" Trumbull, 1896-1968). The Weston home was the family's principal residence. Summers were spent at Cataumet, in a home built by Winsor overlooking Buzzards Bay and, in later years, at an estate on Mt. Desert Island in Maine.

To provide convenient private schooling for his children, Winsor was instrumental in establishing the Pigeon Hill School, the predecessor of the present Meadowbrook School. According to the oral history by Winsor Gale, a nephew,

> The Pigeon Hill School was founded by a group of parents who wanted their children to have a private education as opposed to the public schools. They included my Uncle Robert Winsor, the John and Carlie Paines, the William and Authur Coburns, and also a group from Wayland.

The school had its origins in Waltham in 1890 but moved to Weston in 1905 and was renamed to reflect its new location on Pigeon Hill Road. Winsor purchased the lot where the school was located from Horace Sears in 1903 and owned it until 1918. The early 20th century school building is still standing at 10 Pigeon Hill Road, where it was converted to a house in about 1925-26. The school's location was presumably chosen for its convenience to the Central Massachusetts Railroad line which linked Weston to Wayland and points west.

To provide skating and swimming facilities for his children, Winsor dug the large pond on Skating Pond Road out of marshland. Elise Palmer, Winsor's granddaughter, dates this pond to 1902, while Winsor Gale's oral history gives the date as 1910.
The pond, which measures approximately 150 feet wide and 300 feet long, was open to

all children of the town in the early 20th century. In "*Growing Up in Weston*," Philip Coburn describes playing hockey here with the stars of the 1915 Harvard team who were friends of the Winsor boys. According to Coburn, "at the west end of the pond was a curling rink where a horse drawn plane made the ice as smooth as glass." At the end was an area for "fancy skating." The whole pond was lighted at night, with a switch that could be used by anyone to turn the lights on if they wished to skate. A log shelter still remains beside the pond. Here, according to Coburn, "Mrs. (Robert) Winsor sat in front of a table, serving hot coffee and tea to the grown-ups and marshmallows and cocoa to the children." This custom, which lasted until the Winsor boys went into the service in 1917, provides insight into the gentility of estate life in Weston in the early 20th century.

Winsor's daughter, Mary Pickard Winsor II, nicknamed "Bud" or "Buddy," married Walter H. Trumbull Jr., and their son, Philip, still lives in Weston. The three Winsor boys followed their father's footsteps at Harvard, Classes of 1905 (Robert), 1915 (Philip) and 1916 (Sandy), although Sandy left during his junior year and did not graduate. Robert Jr. and Sandy Winsor, along with their brother-in-law Walter H. Trumbull Jr., joined Kidder, Peabody and were made partners in the late 1920s. Robert stayed at Kidder, Peabody throughout his career. His colonial revival style home at 29 Winsor Way was demolished about 1987. Philip died of pneumonia in France in World War I while serving as an ambulance driver. Sandy left Kidder, Peabody in the early 1930s, spent some time as an insurance salesman, and beginning about 1936 worked only for the family real estate trust, serving as treasurer.

When Sandy married Elizabeth Hope Bancroft in 1916, his father built the young couple a picturesque shingled house in the English revival style, still located at 37 Skating Pond Road. This house stayed in the Winsor family until 1994, when it was put up for sale by Sandy Winsor's daughter, Elise (Mrs. Sanford Palmer). The Alexander Winsor House is the most architecturally distinctive of the remaining buildings associated with the Winsor estate.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, Winsor purchased additional land, bringing his acreage to 203 in 1905, 329 in 1910, and 471 in 1915. One of his largest purchases was the Hagar farm, purchased in 1903 and 1906, for a total of 149 acres. By 1918, Winsor is listed in town tax records as owner of 472 acres, making his estate second in size only to the estate of Charles J. Paine, who had owned 658 acres at the time of his death in 1916.

In November, 1918, Winsor made a dramatic change in the ownership of his land, forming the Weston Real Estate Trust "for the purpose of holding, managing, and selling certain real estate situated in said Weston" with Winsor and his three surviving children as the initial trustees. Winsor turned over 422 acres to the trust and retained 16 acres for his own use. At the same time, Winsor deeded 50 acres to the Weston Golf Club.

The formation of the Weston Real Estate Trust coincided with the resettlement of the Weston Golf Club on Winsor's property. Winsor was one of the original directors of the club, which was founded in 1894 and was originally located in the Kendal Green area on land hired from several owners. Winsor served as president of the Weston Golf Club

Robert Winsor. Photo undated, probably ca. 1913
(Photo courtesy of Elise Winsor Palmer)

from 1914 to 1925. In 1916, the club was looking for an alternate location, since one owner planned to sell his part of the course for house lots and another owner refused to allow golfers to play on Sundays. Winsor proposed the use of his land, and by 1917, a nine-hole course had been completed, several tennis courts constructed, and the Winsor barn renovated into a clubhouse which included four bowling alleys. The architect for this renovation was Harold Graves, a local architect who was a member of the club at the time and offered his services free of charge. Graves' design for the remodeled clubhouse was much altered after a devastating fire in 1938.

Contrary to popular belief, Winsor did not donate his property to the golf club. The 1918 deed to the Weston Golf Club makes it clear that Winsor financed the purchase of the property and renovations by holding a $38,500 mortage, payable with interest charges which rose by ½ per cent per year from zero during the first two years to 4 ½ per cent. Although Winsor sold, rather than donated, the land, he included a clause in the deed stating that "the granted premises shall be used only for a course or country club" or the property would revert to himself or his heirs.

The Weston Golf Club was fortunate to secure the services of Donald C. Ross to design and supervise the building of new golf course. Ross, a Scotsman, has been described as "one of the world's outstanding golf architects." Construction on a nine hole course was done by Hugh Nawn Construction Company, with labor provided by men working with picks and shovels aided by horse drawn vehicles used for earth moving. An additional nine holes, also designed by Ross, were initiated in 1920 and completed in 1923, again financed by a mortgage from Winsor.

Ray Heist, Weston Golf Club historian, has pointed out how Winsor's resettlement of the golf course onto his land enhanced its residential value, allowing him to transform farm land into prime residential tracts. The Meadowbrook Road area may be among the first examples in the country of a high-priced residential community developed around a golf course, making full use of the fairways as design elements.

A second institution which enhanced the value of the Winsor land holdings was the Meadowbrook School, which moved from Pigeon Hill to its present site in 1923 and was renamed at that time. As with the golf course, Winsor made his land available for purchase. In September, 1924, the first year at the new site, Winsor's daughter, Mary (Mrs. Walter H. Trumbull, Jr.) was president of the Executive Committee and his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Alexander Winsor, was a member of that committee.

When ground was broken for the Meadowbrook School, the road from Wellesley Street was extended and renamed Meadowbrook Road. The new accessibility of the area led the Weston Golf Club to initiate a winter sports program here utilizing the pond next to the school for skating and the hill for a toboggan chute and sledding. Golf club historian Ray Heist describes how the pond was lighted, a warming shack installed, and the school kitchen used for preparation of warm drinks and snacks. Sections of the pond were reserved for different types of skating, and "mechanical music provided an air of festivity." This tradition continued until 1966.

Development of the Meadowbrook Road area began in earnest in the 1920s. The Weston Roads Trust was founded to build and pave roads. New owners were required - and are still required today - to become members of the Roads Trust and contribute to the support of the roads, which are still privately owned. Seven to eight miles of private roads traverse the property.

According to Phil Coburn's memoir, "*Growing Up in Weston*," Winsor wanted to attract young married couples to live around the golf club, so he sponsored a competition with a $1000 prize to the architect who could design a house that a young couple could easily expand to accommodate a growing family. According to Coburn, the designs of two leading local architects, Samuel Mead and Harold Graves, were displayed at the club. Coburn states that the seven houses on the golf club side of Wellesley Street are the result of the competition. However, only six houses (numbers 40,44,56,60,64 and 70) were actually built, one of which, 64, is on a double lot.

The Weston Real Estate Trust had a small sales office and published a promotional brochure reflecting Winsor's desire to protect the rural character of the land for the benefit of the new development. Under a full-page picture of a waterfall is the caption "The path along the brook is open to the neighborhood but is not for sale." Prospective buyers were advised that "The owners are very anxious to preserve the appearance and the atmosphere of the Country. No lots of less than two acres are sold. A very pleasant

Family of Robert Winsor. Top Row: Alexander (Sandy) Winsor, Walter H. Trumbull, Mary "Bud" Winsor Trumbull, Robert Winsor, Jr. Second Row: Hope Bancroft Winsor (married to Sandy), Eleanor Magee Winsor, Robert Winsor, Susan Baker Winsor (married to Robert, Jr.), Third Row (grandchildren): Elise Winsor Palmer, Philip Trumbull, Robert Winsor III. Forth Row: Alexander Winsor, Jr. Photo taken about 1920-21. (Photo courtesy of Elise Winsor Palmer)

neighborhood has developed" and "No restrictions are made in regard to the cost or size of houses built on the land. It is felt that large and small houses have the same chance for beauty, and that the people who come to this community have the perception to adapt houses to the natural beauty of the surroundings." The brochure adds that "Before land is shown, it is asked the name of prospective buyers be given the Trust." It is important to point out that, although some lots were, in fact, less than two acres, the lots were large in this era before municipal zoning regulations.

Toward the end of his life, Winsor suffered from ill health. The death of his wife in 1924 took an emotional toll, and the stock market crash of October, 1929 has been described as "devastating" to Winsor and his firm, where he was by then the senior active partner. Winsor died of a heart attack in New York City on January 7, 1930 at the age of 71.

The Weston Real Estate Trust was managed by Sandy Winsor until his death in 1967 and thereafter by Philip Trumbull, son of Winsor's daughter, Mary. In 1986, after nearly 70 years of operation, the land had all been sold and the Weston Real Estate Trust was dissolved.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: I would like to thank Elise Winsor Palmer and her daughters Hope Palmer Taylor and Sally Palmer Bishop, as well as Ray Heist, Weston Golf Club historian, and Philip Trumbull, all of whom I consulted on the details of this article.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is an abbreviated form of a longer paper on this subject, which contains all the necessary footnotes regarding sources; it is on file at he Museum of Weston Historical Society. Pamela W. Fox, as a preservation consultant, carried out an architectural and historical survey for the Weston Historical Commission between October 1993 and June 1994.

The new flagpole being delivered to the Town Hall, 1968

MORE ABOUT THE FLAGPOLE

It was pleasing again to receive the Weston Historical Society's Bulletin and to read that you are resuming publication. As almost always in the past, the minute the Bulletin arrived, I read it. The tidbits of Weston history and old photographs have an unfailing attraction for me.

Now I am responding to Dr. Laska's invitation "to one and all" to put down a memory. This one is a footnote to Sam Payson's article "The Two Weston Flagpoles."

> What is missing from the Payson article is the politics of that town meeting in 1968 when Ralph Woodworth proposed that the town spend $8,045 on replacement of the 110 foot Douglas fir flagpole. The dominant national political event was the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. The anti-war movement was just getting underway, and many in Weston were in the vanguard. Their reading of Woodworth's proposal was that it was a symbolic statement in support of the war. Displaying the flag, and how the flag was displayed, were ways people showed what side they were on.

There had not been much discussion about this warrant article before the Special Town Meeting. Those who raised questions about the article and spoke in opposition probably took Bud Koester and the selectmen by surprise. Opposition appeared to be spontaneous. There were objections about the expense and about the necessity for Weston to have one of the tallest flagpoles in the nation. The supporters replied that it had to be this high to be seen over the pine trees. An opponent suggested that height could be achieved in the same way the tallest mast were constructed, by binding together two long spars.

The vote was finally taken and the yeas and nays too close to call. A standing vote was required. A photographer from the Town Crier snapped a flash picture of those voting "no" to the purchase. In the 1960s, sensitivity about patriotism questions was still fresh enough from the McCarthy hearings that the prospect of a published photograph of those voting against the purchase of a flag pole caused an immediate objection. The moderator's attention was promptly sought, and his intervention requested, to prohibit photographs being taken during town meeting votes. The moderator concurred, and the nay vote was again called while the photographer stood to the side.

In the Weston tradition, once the vote was taken there was no lingering discussion, but there were complications. Transporting the World War I flagpole from Boston to Weston by way of Portsmouth, N.H. was nothing compared to transporting that Douglas fir from Washington state across country by truck.

One truck could not handle it, and a second trailer bed had to be attached. Perhaps Ward Carter could add a further footnote on what he remembers about that operation and the pole's erection-yet another challenge.

Thank you all for your efforts at preserving Weston's history.

Deborah Ecker

Mrs. Deborah Ecker is a long time resident of Weston. She served on the Finance Committee. She has been an active member of the League of Women Voters and member of its State Board. She was also president of the Weston League of Women Voters.

Town Administrator J. Ward Carter does not recollect the details of the Town Meeting at which the flagpole was discussed, but he does remember that there was a lot of lively discussion about it. He writes:

"The new pole came to East Boston to the Pigeon Hollow Spar Company where it was finished and shipped by truck from there to Weston. The original pole was some 100 feet above groud originally, but a small section had been cut off when it was rotted out. The present pole has approximately 10 feet burried in the ground."

Mr. Carter kindly lent us the picture showing the flagpole as it was delivered, unpainted, to its site in Weston. Many thanks!

Vera Laska

MORE ABOUT THE WESTON - WATERTOWN BRIDGE

The Weston Historical Society Bulletin of Spring, 1994 came to hand a few moments ago. I was immediately struck by the configuration of the old bridge as I had wondered what it might have looked like. Approximately ten years ago while researching a 1784 Lottery ticket I had purchased - proceeds to benefit the Watertown Bridge - I believe I may have learned the story of the Weston Bridge picture on your Bulletin.

Before and after the Revoluntionary War, Rt. 30 was the main thoroughfare in and out of Boston to and from the West. A ferry operated there and was a great inconvenience to those who used the muddy track filled road, as I have learned from reading original letters of merchants and travelers of the period. After the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783, one of the first efforts citizens of our new nation undertook was to rebuild and improve the infrastructure and transportation system of the 13 original states which had always been badly neglected by Mother England. The financing of the Charles Street Bridge, also across the Charles River, in 1785 was the largest single project undertaken in this country up to that time.

As I recall, differences of who (Weston or Watertown) was to pay for the needed bridge improvements and how, was an issue. In any case the Massachusetts legislature sometimes in 1784 authorized a lottery to be held - proceeds to pay for the bridge which is most likely the one pictured on your Bulletin. I have in my collection one of the original 1784 Watertown Bridge Tickets signed by Isaac Jones himself, and sold at his still familiar Golden Ball Tavern on the Post Road in Weston center. This leads me to speculate that only Weston's side was financed via this lottery, as Weston was predominantely a sparsely populated rural farming town in 1784, and the more populous neighbor, Watertown, had more means to draw from.

I seem to remember that the lottery was not too successful, perhaps also contributing to the less ornate Weston side of the bridge. In any case further research may turn up the definitive answer. In the meantime it's nice to see a Weston Historical Society in action and encouraging others to be involved. History can provide wonderful entertainment! Keep it up. Enclosed is my family membership

Ned W.Downing

Ned W. Downing is a Weston resident and retired investment banker. He is a curator for autographs, letters, books, broadsides and Revolutionary War financial instruments in Wellesley.

MESSAGE TO THE READERS

The Editorial Board of the BULLETIN has been gratified by the responses of our readers. As you see in this issue, there was a good echo on our articles about the Weston - Watertown (Newton) bridge and the flagpole. We also had two offers of the missing issue of an old BULLETIN, from Mrs. Raymond Paynter and Mrs. John Chisholm. All this is very encouraging, and we thank the contributors.

While you, the readers, are not in the category of "publish or perish," nevertheless, please sit down and write us about your experiences in Weston. This is an easy way to become a published author!

UNINVITED GUEST - A RACCOON

On a dusky, tenebrous afternoon not too long ago, it must have been in the late nineteen seventies, my husband Andrew and I were returning home. As the automatic garage door went up, lo and behold, who sits in the back of the garage but a portly, corpulent raccoon, staring right back at us.

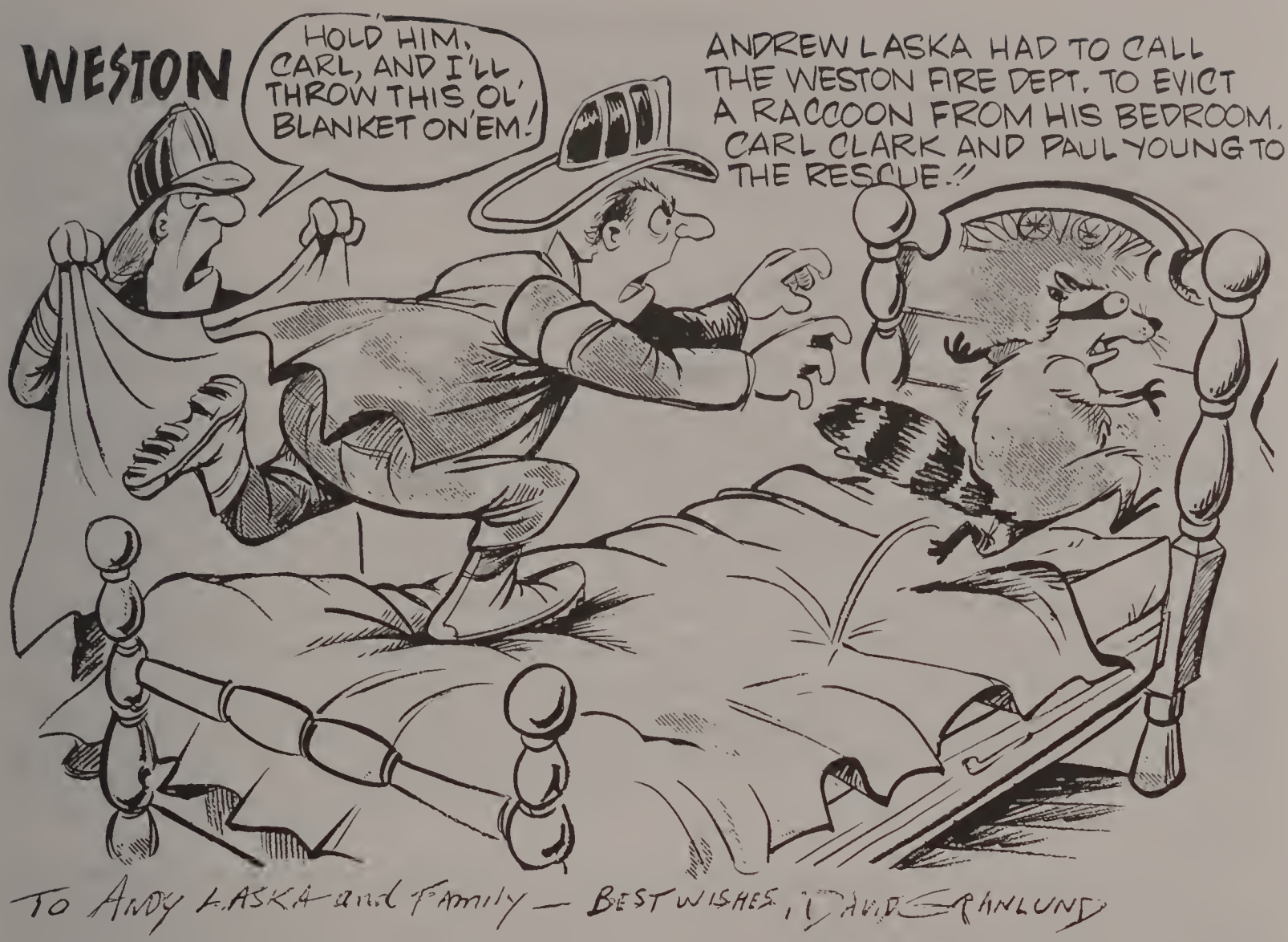
For several days we had been noticing that some animal keeps nibbling at our apples stored in the garage. Whatever creature it was, its mother did not teach it to finish an apple once it started eating it; no, dozens of lovely golden delicious apples were bitten into then left for the next. An expert exterminator summoned for consultation determined on the basis of droppings that the intruder and freeloader must have been a rat, or more likely several rats. He (the exterminator) was rearing to do business with us. He was scheduled to do his deadly intervention in a few days, to the tune of a three figure charge.

Facing the raccoon, we knew we had the real culprit. The raccoon was growling and hissing, showing its teeth - which pretty well matched the imprints on the apples. Feeling cornered, the raccoon, we hoped, would run out of the garage. Not so. Instead, it took a beeline to the little swinging door from the garage into the house, built for Gypsy the Cat, so he could commute to his toilet in the garage. At the same time, Gypsy appeared, hoping to escape from the house on an illegal outing. The cat stared at the raccoon, the raccoon stared at the cat. We feared for the safety of the cat, in case they got into a fight. But we were wrong again. The cat marched out into the falling night, with utter contempt toward both raccoon and its masters' restraining voices.

The raccoon meanwhile went through the little swinging door, or rather it wanted to get through it, but it was so fat that it got stuck in the door. It was the perfect moment to grab the raccoon by its bushy tail, but I thought better of it and desisted this temptation. The raccoon kept wiggling in and out, until finally he squeezed itself through the little door into the house.

It was facing three possible dark refuges, where it could hide. But no; instead, it chose the stairs leading to the main level where lights were on. We did not see it. What ensued was a lively debate between my husband and myself, he claming that the raccoon run up the stairs, while I claimed, with total logic, I am still sure, that an animal when pursued tries to hide in the dark. Well - I lost that one, as the raccoon ended up upstairs, ran along a corridor and found a hiding place under our beds in the bedroom.

What now? If in doubt, call the Weston firemen, of course. I thought that they would be utterly amazed that we have a raccoon under our beds. Not so, again. "Another one?" they asked; "we'll be right over." And true to their word, they were. They isolated themselves with the angry animal, moved the beds hither and yon, and finally threw an old blanket over the growling raccoon. It took both of them to hold the wiggling shape inside the blanket. They called us and ordered us to open a window. While I expressed anxiety over the saftey of the raccoon, my spouse obligingly opened a window. In a nick of time, the raccoon flew through the air, landing, still inside the blanket, in the back yard. It emerged, shook itself, threw a disapproving glance upward, and hightailed it into the woods.



Dave Granlund's cartoon of the two Weston firemen chasing the raccoon in the Laskas' bedroom.

So this was chapter one of our raccoon story, perhaps entitled "The Encounter," enough by itself to tell your grand-children about.

I though that the two firemen, Carl Clark and Paul Young, were truly brave, and should be memorialized; so I wrote a letter to the editor in the local newspaper, the Town Crier, lauding these stouthearted men, who willingly exposed themselves to danger to save both us and the raccoon. Call that chapter two, "The Announcement."

But there is more: chapter three came about in the shape of a marvelloulsly funny cartoon. It seems that Dave Granlund, the cartoonist of the Middlesex News, read about the episode and found it worthy of his pen. He drew the wonderful cartoon of the raccoon, fleeing the two firemen. Just look at it: the expression of the face of the masked, bushy tailed raccoon, the speed that shows from the whole drawing - you can see for yourself that here is strategy and action!

The post scriptum to the story is that once we saw the cartoon, my husband contacted the artist, Dave Granlund, and he gallantly donated the original to us. He aslo kindly gave permission for the cartoon to illustrate this article in the Bulletin, and this we gratefully acknowledge.

Vera Laska

Just a note of fact: raccoon (or racoon) is a word of Algonquian origin; the raccoon is a nocturnal, plantigrade, largely carnivorous mammal, called in Latin procyon lotor. Fireman Bill Hourihan informed me recently that the fire station receives between 50 and 75 calls per year lately about raccoons sighted on Weston property. By no means should people try to catch them, as they might carry rabies and bite.

MUSEUM NEWS

The Board of Directors at their meeting on Tuesday, February 21st, 1995 unanimously appointed Dr. Vera Laska as the new Curator of the Museum of the Weston Historical Society. This post was unfilled ever since the first Curator, Mrs. Alice Fraser, resigned in 1991.

Dr. Laska has a PhD in American history from the Univeristy of Chicago and has been teaching at Regis College since 1966. She moved to Weston in 1964 with her husband, Andrew an international business executive, now retired, and her son Thomas. She directed for five years the Weston History Project at Regis College, the fruits of which cover various aspects of Weston history, such as education, taverns, firefighting, police forces, historic markers, etc. Among these research projects are the inventory of the historical archives in the Town Hall and an Index to Lamson's history of the town.

She is the author of seven books and of over 200 articles and reviews in professional journals and newspapers; she has a column in the TOWN CRIER since 1972. She is the recipient of numerous awards, among them Outstanding Teacher of America (1972), the Kidger Award for Excellence in History (1984) and the George Washington Honor Medal in Communication (1990). In 1993 she was Fulbright professor of U.S. History in Prague.

The Museum is still in a preparatory stage, but visitors are welcome on Wednesdays between 10 and 12 in the morning. (We are closed when the schools are closed). If you have a research project and the above time does not suit you, please call for an appointment Douglas Henderson at 893-1303

The Museum Committee of Vera Laska, George Amadon and Douglas Henderson is still working on the compilation of the inventory of documents, photographs and artifacts on the premises.

Our next project is to have the place painted and have it ready for viewing by the public. New town displays and the slide presentation by Ted Kingsbury of Wellesley are ongoing.

We still are in urgent need of some rugs and would welcome donations of the them from some good soul. Remember, it is tax deductable.

Weston Historical Society's Board of Directors

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REMEMBERING
Alice Cutter Tyler Fraser (1903 - 1995)

It is with deep sorrow that we are recording the passing of one of the most faithful and dedicated members of the Weston Historical Society, Alice Fraser. She was for many years the Curator of the Weston Historical Society collections at the Josiah Smith (Jones House) Tavern.

She was born on July 24, 1903 and died on February 14, 1995, on Valentine's day, in the Weston Manor Nursing Home.

While born in Medford, she soon moved with her parents to Weston. She went through the Weston schools, then graduated from Boston University in 1924. She became a teacher in Wellesley and retired thirty years ago. She remained highly active both in the First Parish Unitarian Church in Weston and in the Weston Historical Society. She was a co-founder and trustee of the Weston War Memorial Scholarship Fund and belonged to the Women Descendants of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston.

Her cousin Charles B. Cutter of Weston reminisced about Alice and her family recently. Below are his vivid memories for all to share about this extraordinary and memorable woman whom we shall all miss.

Vera Laska

VIGNETTES FROM THE LIVES OF ALICE FRASER AND HER FAMILY

Alice Fraser was born on July 24, 1903, the same day that her father died of heart trouble and pneumonia. The doctors advised not telling his wife Helen. She remained in the hospital for two weeks, before coming home with her baby Alice. When she was told of her husband's death, the shock so affected her mind that she could not care for the new baby and her older sister Elinor. She was confined to a hospital for the rest of her life.

Helen's sister Susan, a Weston school teacher of thiry-six years, gave up teaching to stay with the two children at the family homestead at Cutter's Corner. In November, her father Benjamin F. Cutter, died. He had been a selectman for eight years in Weston and also served as Road Commissioner. A relative, the attorney Frank Bond, was in charge of the estate.

Elinor graduated from Weston High School in 1919 and after finishing Framingham Normal School become a school teacher. Alice graduated from Weston High School in 1920 and four years later from Boston University. She was a member of Delta Delta Delta Sorority and its president. After graduation, she joined the National Sorority and was president of that organization for several years. She also became a teacher in Wellesley.

She married James Edwain Fraser, who was a captain for the United Fruit Company and later for the Matson Line. He was away from home a great deal. He had an adventurous life. His ship was sunk while in a convoy in the Atlantic during World War II; he survived eight hours in a life-boat with his crew before being rescued. Then his ship carried a cargo of 100 drums of aviation gasoline and bombs from Norfolk, Virginia, to Bombay, India. German submarines were lurking off Norfolk. He said that there would have been fireworks had he been hit! He blacked out his ship and after a week's waiting,

on a very dark night, he ordered "Full speed ahead!" and rushed out of Norfolk and did not slow down until he was forty miles out at sea. In Bombay he faced another problem, how to unload and get the cargo quickly out of town; the Japanese were set to bomb Bombay; he managed to unload and get his ship out of port before the Japanese bombed the city. A brave man!

Alice's son Norman was also a courageous man; he received an award for completing over 1,000 parachute jumps. He now builds, flies and sells hot air balloons in Kissimmee, Florida. Another son, James D. Fraser, lives in Weston.

Alice Fraser was both morally and phsyically a courageous person, as the following story will tell you. Alice at one time delivered milk for Frank Pope, who owned and ran the Ferndale Farm on South Avenue in Weston. She did this by pung in the winter and by wagon in the summer. Pope's father, called by all "Grandpa Pope," came from North Dakota and had twenty wild horses shipped to Weston. Alice was considered an expert rider, so the cow-hands saddled a colt and boosted her into the saddle, telling her to hang on! That she did - the colt took off bucking and weaving with Alice aboard. She brought the colt back to the stables and demounted safely. This again showed her courage.

Charles B. Cutter

Charles B. Cutter is a native and lifetime resident of Weston. His father was the brother of Helen, Alice Fraser's mother. He is a charter member and was president of the Weston Rotary Club.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Membership dues: Individual $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 1995 Volume XXVI, No. 2

HISTORICAL PUZZLE

This photograph of eleven charming young ladies was found in a box marked "Weston High School Alumni Association, c. 1866 -." Can you identify any of the faces? Try to compare them with photos in your family album. If successful, please call George Amadon at 893-8870.

We have literally hundreds of photographs at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, most of them without any indication of time, place and subject. We are calling for longtime residents of Weston to come and try to identify at least some of these photos, which could be a treasure trove of Weston history. Come and see us on Wednesdays between 10 and 12 a.m. at the Josiah Smith Tavern.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WESTON, 1638 - 1995

Wherever one looks, Weston's land shows the marks of glacial action. Its few relatively open fields, boulder strewn, and now defined by stone walls, are the lake bed of the glacial Lake Sudbury which covered most of the area around Weston, as well as Weston itself. The natural dike which held back the lake waters is in the eastern part of Weston, and the breach through which the waters drained is still visible today. A "glacial erratic," a large boulder said to be at the geographical center of Weston, was carried here by the glacier from its original ledge twenty-five miles away. The water courses which drained away from the glacier's retreating mass became Indian trails which were quickly broadened and deepened by the first European settlers. State highways Routes 117, 20 and 30 follow these old trails.

Weston was first known as the Farmers Precinct of Watertown, and was surveyed in 1638 in order to allocate holdings. The first allotments were disputed, and the area was nicknamed "The Lands of Contention." A later survey, in 1663, was accepted by the settlers, and the area became the Third Middlesex Precinct.

Church attendance on the Sabbath was compulsory, but travel to the church in the eastern part of Watertown was burdensome for farmers in the outlying area. After many petitions and angry debates, the General Court in 1710 acted on a petition to incorporate the Farmers Precinct as the parish (town) of Weston, and the Town of Weston was formally established in 1713.

The local residents had, however, already started building their own church in 1695, a building which was never completed. Another meeting house, on the site of the present First Parish Church, was begun in 1721. This building was remodelled and repaired in 1800, and two porches and a steeple were added. The church also bought a bell, still in the present church, from Paul Revere for $443.12, an allowance of $72.89 being made for the original bell (a part of the loot from the Battle of Bennington, or so it is said).

The First Parish was not only the center of the town's religious life. It was also the administrator for town affairs for most of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, both the parish records and the precinct records for the period 1713 - 1746 have disappeared. The Town of Lincoln separated from Weston in 1746 (again, over church attendance difficulties, Weston having been negligent in maintaining its roads). The records then reappear.

Other denominations, the Baptists in 1776 and the Methodists in 1794, were gaining parishioners, and in 1820 were exempted from paying tithes to maintain the First Parish. A Town Hall replaced the church as the meeting place for administration of town affairs shortly thereafter.

Weston schools have a long and mostly honorable place in the history of the town. Salary for a school master was first voted in 1650, for a Mr. Richard Norcross, who continued in this capacity for more than fifty years. Classes were generally held in private homes, until district schools were built, when town affairs passed out of the hands of the First Parish. A high school was built in 1875 with town funds, and the Weston public school system has become a major attraction to people moving to the area.

The town also voted funds for the establishment of a public library, in 1857. It was housed in the Town Hall for many years. Public spirited citizens saw to it that in 1899

work started on a library which until 1995 has served Weston residents. A new, modern library now stands near the town center.

The early settlers were, from their first arrival, accustomed to the use of firearms and organized themselves in military units as trained bands and alarm men. They saw action during Indian raids and during the French and Indian Wars. They were ready, when on the morning of April 19, 1775 news reached Weston of the British foray into Concord. Colonel Samuel Lamson mustered one hundred men in front of the church and marched to join in the attacks on the retreating British troops. Weston's residents have served their country in all its military engagements since. Bronze plaques on the walls of the Town Hall bear the names of Westonians who served in the two World Wars.

Although established as a Farmers Precinct, Weston's mostly thin, rocky, acid soils could not sustain commercial crops. The farmers soon turned to animal husbandry, importing hay and grain to supplement their pasturage.

The roads leading north, west and south from Boston through Weston did, however, provide a profitable alternative to farming. Inns were soon established on these highways. The Golden Ball Tavern and the Josiah Smith Tavern, now historical sites, remain as vivid reminders of those days. The Flagg Tavern, also on the Boston Post Road, at which General Washington and his aides overnighted on October 23, 1789, was destroyed by fire in about 1906, but the chimneys were still standing in 1940.

The town's storekeepers also served the travelling public as well as Weston residents. Lieutenant Jones' account books dated 1745 record his transactions in beef, clothing and lumber as well as his banking activities. The Lamson family, noted earlier, kept a dry goods store on the Post Road which was famous in the area for the quality of its merchandise. The Lamsons were succeeded as storekeepers by the George Cutting family whose store, moved from its original site beside the old town hall when the new Town Common was built, continued in business until the 1930s.

The water courses noted earlier were also put to profitable use. Weston was the site of many small mills and factories. Saw mills, grist mills and a tannery were first, but later came machine shops for tools and machinery for the cotton mills, and wood working shops, for school furniture.

Weston's streams were too small to allow effective competition with the nearby Charles River, and Waltham and Watertown became factory towns. The streams did, however, prove attractive to the City of Cambridge Water Authority, and so the Weston mills were dismantled. The last industry in Weston was the Hastings Organ Factory, and it closed its doors in 1936, a victim of the Great Depression.

Some dairy farms persisted in Weston until the 1920s. Many of the farms, however, had been bought by Boston merchants and professional men in the late 1800s, first as summer homes, but later as year-round estates. These people were active in town affairs, and much of the quality of Weston living is owing to their care.

Most of these large estates are gone now. The Merriam and Morrison estates were bought in the 1920s by the Catholic Church, the first for Weston College (now the Campion Center), and the second for the Regis College campus. The Case Estates were given to the Arnold Arboretum by the last Case heirs. The Hubbard estate donated a large tract of land along the Charles River to the state for public recreation. This has become the Leo T. Martin public golf course. Some of the holdings were acquired by the town

as town forest, conservation land, or municipal purposes land under state regulation. Large areas were taken over by the state for distribution reservoirs. It may be noted that Weston is the uncompensated guardian of water quality for both Cambridge and Boston.

Weston now is a privileged enclave in the midst of urban sprawl, a desirable status address for professional people whose real interests lie elsewhere, as voting patterns demonstrate. Registered voters in Weston number about 6,500, but the average turnout over the last ten years for town elections and town meetings was fewer than 1,000. The town is well served by its employees, few of whom can afford to live in town. The cost of land in Weston makes it difficult to find locations for affordable housing, either for these employees, the elderly, or for minorities. The small group of concerned residents man the many boards, committees and commissions, with the overall guidance of three selectmen and the capable town administrator, Mr. Ward Carter. It is by their efforts that Weston's sense of community is kept alive.

Douglas Henderson

Douglas Henderson is a lifelong resident of Weston and a graduate of Weston High School. He received his Bachelor's degree from Boston University and his Master's degree from the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts University. His career at the Department of State took him to Mexico, Chile, Peru and Switzerland, culminating in the U.S. ambassadorship in Bolivia. He also served as U.S. representative with the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C. Parts of this article appeared in the 1995 - 96 guide "Living in Wellesley and Weston" of the Ruby Press.

EDITOR'S NOTE: More details about Weston history can be found in the following books:

Hurd, D. Hamilton, *The History of Middlesex County*, 3 vols., Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis, 1890.

Lamson, Daniel, *History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts*, Weston: no publisher, 1913.

Ripley, Emma F., *Weston, A Puritan Town*, Weston: The First Parish, 1961.

*Dickson, Brenton H. and Lucas, Homer C. *One Town in the American Revolution: Weston, Massachusetts*, Weston: Weston Historical Society, 1976.

Reminiscences of old Weston are contained in Brenton H. Dickson's

**Once Upon a Pung*, Weston: by the author, 1963, and

**Random Recollections*, Weston: by the author, 1977.

Books marked with an asterisk are on sale at the museum of the Weston Historical Society for $7.50 a copy, Wednesdays between 10 and 12 a.m. (Think of Christmas presents).

HISTORY IN PICTURES
THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

The old Weston Public Library, 1899 - 1995, on the corner of School Street and the Boston Post Road. The only clue as to the date of this postcard is the note that it requires a 1^{c} stamp for domestic and 2^{c} stamp for foreign mailing. The U.S. Postal Service informs us that these rates were in use from 1919 to 1925 and again from 1929 to 1952.

Photo Andrew J. Laska

The new Weston Public Library, at 87 School Street, on the corner of Alphabet Lane, opened on Monday, April 10, 1995 at 10 a.m. Opening celebration took place on Sunday, May 7, 1995 from 2 to 4 p.m.

School Reunion, Kendal Green, (Weston) Mass.

JUNE 24, 1893.

PROGRAMME.

2.00 to 3.30—Reception at the Schoolhouse by

Mrs. Maria A. (Warren) Pierce,
Mrs. Mary J. (Hastings) Giddings,
Miss Annie C. Coburn,
Miss Alice Tucker.
Mr. Alonza S. Fiske,
Mr. F. H. Hastings,
Mr. Arthur L. Coburn.

3.30 to 5.00—Social Intercourse, Rambles, Games, Etc.,

At the Ball Ground, at the Tennis Court, at the Residence of Mr. F. H. Hastings, and in the woods and fields; and at Hastings Hall.

5.00 to 6.00—Supper at the Large Tent.

6.00 to 6.30—Brief Exercises at the Large Tent.

1.—A History of the Old School, prepared by Miss Elizabeth S. Gowing and Miss Mary Frances Pierce; read by Arthur L. Coburn.
2.—Short Addresses by Rev. C. F. Russell and others.
3.—Poem, Whittier's "Reunion," read by Wm. H. Coburn.
4.—"Auld Lang Syne."—All Singing.

CLOSING HYMN.

"Auld Lang Syne."

Should auld acquaintance be forgot.
  And never brought to mind;
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
  And songs of auld lang syne?
For auld lang syne we meet to-night,
  For auld lang syne;
To sing the songs our fathers sang
  In days of auld lang syne.

We've passed through many varied scenes,
  Since youth's unclouded day;
And friends and hopes and happy dreams
  Time's hand hath swept away;
And voices that once joined with ours,
  In days of auld lang syne,
Are silent now, and blend no more
  In songs of auld lang syne.

But when we cross the sea of life,
  And reach the heavenly shore,
We'll sing the songs our fathers sing,
  Transcending those of yore:
We'll meet to sing diviner strains
  Than those of auld lang syne,
Immortal songs of praise, unknown
  In days of auld lang syne.

On reverse side of the announcement, the rarely seen full text of "Auld Lang Syne:"

QUERY -- Mystery Manuscript

We have in our possession a dark blue, 8 × 11 inch, three-ring binder, with several hundreds of typed pages without pagination, without a cover page that would indicate author, title, date or any other information leading to the solving of the mystery of what this manuscript really is.

The first page starts thus: "H1.50.1, Massachusetts Historical Guide," followed by an introduction and chronology, indicating events from 1600 to 1800.

The volume is the result of endless hours of work and sincere tender loving care. We are looking for the AUTHOR!

V. L.

THE 1995 ANNUAL CHARTER ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The Annual Charter Anniversary Dinner took place on Thursday, May 11th, 1995 at the Upper Student Union Lounge of Regis College, starting with wine and cheese at 6 p.m., dinner at 6:45 p.m. and the speaker's presentation at 8:15.

The speaker was professor William Fowler, chairman of the Department of History at Northeastern University and editor of *The New England Quarterly*; his topic: ''History of Boston Harbor''. This was the second appearance of Professor Fowler at our Society.

He presented a convincing case that the past as well as the future of Boston depends upon the activity in and around Boston Harbor.

The Atlantic provided the early colonists with a source of food, the ''sacred cod,'' and a strong defense against the French and the Spanish. The safety of a large, protected harbor encouraged shipbuilding and trading in a city whose major homes and commercial businesses faced the sea. Colonial farmers from communities such as Weston provided additional food products and raw materials which became the basis for a very profitable Massachusetts trade within the British Empire. This trade generated the great fortunes which helped finance the revolution against the mother country. John Hancock's considerable success as a merchant, smuggler, and revolutionary leader would have been impossible without the strong development of the harbor as a center of transatlantic trade.

Having separated themselves from the control of the British monarchy in 1776, Massachusetts residents found themselves abruptly ''thrust out of the British Empire, losing the protection of the British Navy and the guaranteed markets of the Empire.'' Consequently, the Barbary pirates, seeing U.S. ships as fair game, chose to force ship captains to pay or fight. The *U.S.S. Constitution*, currently undergoing extensive renovations, was one of three frigates built to meet this challenge to U.S. shipping rights. Professor Fowler described the ship as a ''living symbol of the maritime crafts and skills of the early nineteenth century.''

Trade and shipbuilding prospered in the nineteenth century, and therefore Boston prospered. Donald McKay, from Nova Scotia, built the fastest ships that ever sailed. His clipper ships broke records traveling to Britain, California, and China and made Boston one of the best-known towns in the world. Fitzhugh Lane came to paint scenes of the town waterfront, as metropolitan as any in the country in the variety of its languages and the travels of its people.

The Civil War ended this successful era; with the Confederates threatening to burn Union ships, ship owners rushed to register their ships under other flags, and the tonnage of the U.S. merchant marine plummeted. Boston Harbor never recovered from this change, as merchants and ship captains retreated to the coastwise trade in timber and coal.

The combined impact of railroad expansion and competition with New York challenged and ultimately defeated, the prominence of Boston. As people began to look inland for travel and markets, a popular saying was heard: ''People who went to the sea for fun would go to hell on a lark.'' In spite of this view, many wealthy individuals did look to the sea for their entertainment, organizing yacht clubs and sailing ''down east'' to Bar Harbor, while others found a boat trip to New York City an inviting vacation.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Boston Harbor had lost much of its commerce, in large part because of the difficulties of redeveloping an area which had been designed

and artificially filled to meet the needs of a much earlier time. Rail lines did not go directly to the docks because of houses and warehouses built tightly together near the port. South Boston had the rail yards, while East Boston had the cargo lines. When the shipping industry adopted the steel container as the standard unit of shipping, further damage was done to the port because Boston does not have the large parking and loading areas required for the most economical use of containers.

Professor Fowler listed a host of difficulties in rejuvenating the port, including the small parking lots, Boston traffic, poor linking of rails and roads, bridges over railroads in New England which are not high enough to accommodate double-stacked containers being shipped to and from ports, terminals surrounded by residential areas, and the building of the Third Harbor Tunner, which will prevent dredging lower than thirty-six feet.

Why should we care? Boston imports virtually everything it needs, and water is still the least expensive method of transportation. The Harbor promises to be a great playground for the twenty-first century, and in a global economy, trade will be more important than ever.

Professor Fowler's illustrations of the history of the Harbor through his slides supported his thesis that the Harbor has been under constant change. Visit the *U.S.S. Constitution Museum* (Boston Naval Shipyard, 242-0543 and Charlestown Naval Shipyard, 426-1812) and take a walking tour of the waterfront district given by Boston By Foot (367-2345: $7.00) if you would like to learn more about the past and present of Boston Harbor, one of our greatest natural resources.

Lee Marsh

Lee Marsh is a long-time Weston resident and one of the outstanding teachers in the Department of History in the Weston High School. She has been the initiator of numerous innovative history programs, connecting her students to town history.

MEMORIAL DAY 1995

Memorial Day of 1995 was celebrated in Weston on Monday, May 29th in the Town Hall and in front of it at the flagpole. After the ringing of the Paul Revere bell, the service started at 10 a.m. Welcoming remarks were spoken by *George F. Amadon* as follows:

> We welcome those who join us in a common desire to leave our fractured society behind us on this day, when we meet together to embrace the old-fashioned values. We are honoring our veterans who have died, were wounded, and served in our armed forces to bring peace and tranquility to our daily lives. We must also credit those who waited, worked and prayed for the safe return of their loved ones.
>
> Welcome to the 116th Memorial Day Celebration in the town of Weston. According to the town records, the first official celebration was in 1879 when the town cornet band was paid forty dollars for their performance.
>
> The first unofficial memorial service took place in Columbia, Mississippi on April 25, 1866, when the ladies of that town scattered flowers over the graves of their beloved confederate sons and husbands. They also decorated the graves of some 40

union soldiers who were buried nearby. The first official day of remembrance was designated by General John A. Logan, Commander-In-Chief of the G.A.R., a union veterans organization, on the 30th of May, 1868. No compassion was shown for the confederate dead. Later still, the last Monday in May became a national holiday to honor veterans of all wars. We now also remember, on this day, our loved ones and friends who are forever gone from us.

We have come together this morning to honor the man and women of the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force who have given their lives in battle defending our world against aggression. They have lost their lives in far away places, at Louisburg, San Juan Hill, Mexico, Gettysburg, seven miles in the air over Tokyo and 200 feet beneath the North Atlantic, Iwo Jima and the Coral Sea. We have not forgotten Korea nor Vietnam. We honor on this day the veterans who had returned and those no longer with us.

50 years ago this year, peace was declared after VE and VJ days were celebrated. This year we again enjoy a relative peaceful existence. May the good Lord allow this to continue.

George F. Amadon

Gen. William A. Knowlton, Ret.

Our speaker for the day was four star general of the U.S. Army, William A. Knowlton, ret., born in 1920 in Weston, who invoked the poet Henry W. Longfellow to express his feelings:

> Often in thought I go up and down
> The pleasant streets of that dear old town
> And my youth comes back to me.

Gen. Knowlton mentioned several Weston men who were decorated for bravery in World War II: Fred Talbott won the Navy Cross for sinking a Japanese warship; Jimmy Funderburk got the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action for bringing his burning plane back from a mission over Rumania; Knowlton himself received the same decoration for reconnaissance duty at Berlin before the American-Russian meeting on the Elbe. "There were many Distinguished Flying Crosses and many, many Air Medals won by men from here," he said.

Jack Pringle left from his freshsman year at Harvard to enter the British army; he received three Military Crosses, one of them for escaping from a Nazi POW camp; he was in eleven prisons, in four countries, and escaped six times!

Henry Atkins was awarded the Bronze Star in 1947, but the army could not locate him then; so belatedly, gen. Knowlton pinned the medal on him.

The speaker also ventured on debated grounds when he touched upon the present controversy around the Smithsonian's exhibit of the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Japan in 1945. The text has been challenged by many, and the exhibit reduced. The Japanese were not exactly behaving in the spirit of bushido, and the Americans were not brutes.

Gen. Knowlton also mentioned by name several Weston men who did not come back. We regret tht we can not print his entire speech verbatim because of the limits of space. But his speech is on file under "Memorial Day, 1995" at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society. A memorable speech, based on admirable research. We thank Gen. Knowlton for his speech, a real gift to the town of Weston.

Vera Laska

Stephen Thomas Riley

PRESENTING:
Stephen Thomas Riley

Stephen T. Riley, or Steve, as he is known to his friends of whem there are many in and around Weston, was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1908, and moved to Weston with his wife Alice in 1952. From 1977 to 1984 he was president of the Weston Historical Society. Until his health failed, he was one of its directors, a tavern keeper of the Golden Ball and a member of the Weston Historic Commission.

An historian, Steve received his A.B., magna cum laude, A.M. and Ph.D. degrees, as well as an honorary LHD, from Clark University, on whose board of trustees he served for many years. He was associated with the prestigious Massachusetts Historical Society, first as assistant librarian and ultimately as its Director. He retired in 1976.

After enlisting in the Army in World War II, he was chosen for the University of Pennsylvania Army Specialized Training Program, which gave him some facility in the kind of Arabic spoken in North Africa. He completed the course but too late; the war had already moved from North Africa into Italy, where the Army had no need for his newly acquired skill. The Army did need him, nonetheless, as a cryptographer, first in Cairo and later in Abadan at the head of the Persian Gulf, reputed to be one of the hottest places on earth. There Steve spent his winter holidays wistfully dreaming of a white Christmas. It was during one of his six-hour shifts at the coding and decoding deck, however, that he was the lucky man to receive and forward to Chungking a momentous message: the Japanese have surrendered. Whenever on leave, he made the most of his tenure in biblical lands, setting foot in such unlikely places as UR of the Chaldees.

He was active in state historic commissions and was a member of the administrative body of the papers of three of our Founding Fathers. Visiting committees he participated in included those of the Boston College Library, the Harvard History Department, the Harvard University Press, Winterthur and Colonial Williamsburg. Among his publications are numerous articles contributed to historical journals. As a volunteer during retirement, he edited with Edward W. Hanson the papers by Robert Treat Paine, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. These papers had been given to the Massachusetts Historical Society by the Paine family of Weston. Volumes I and II were published in 1992.

On the lighter side, the Rileys were enthusiastic campers, crisscrossing the country from Alaska to Key West. They also saw something of the rest of the world, though scarcely in their trusty VW camper!

In addition to memberships in historical organizations, Steve was a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and Manufacturers. He belonged to the Harvard Travellers Club, the St. Botolph Club and the Grolier Club of New York. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and an honorary member of the Club of Odd Volumes.

Steve has been confined to the Kathryn Barton Nursing Home in Wayland with Alzheimer's disease since November, 1991.

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THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Spring, 1994 Volume XXV, No. 1

HISTORICAL HUMOR OR ECONOMIC TESTIMONY?

Weston Bridge

The above drawing by H.O. Rider is from a booklet "Early Days in Auburndale, A Village Chronicle of Two Centuries: 1665-1870," published by the Auburndale Women's Club in the early 1900s. It represents the old bridge over the Charles River on Route 30, near the present Marriott Hotel; once upon a time this route was called the South County Road, nowadays it is referred to as South Avenue. We are reproducing it from the March 1980 issue of the BULLETIN.

As is evident, the Newton side of the bridge is built of stone in the shape of elegant arches. The Weston side is rather pedestrian and looks like it is made of wood. The steps lead to the duck feeding area.

What do you read into this picture? Is it humorous that Weston did not manage to keep up with Newton in style, elegance and show of affluence? Is it a testimony of Weston's economic plight that it could afford only a wooden continuation of the stone arches? It is a "puzzlement"!

We hope that this unanswered question would bother some of you sufficiently to invest time, money and energy into pursuing this puzzle further. If you come up with the answer, including the years of the lifespan of the bridge and the reason why Weston looks like Little Orphan Annie on its side of the bridge, please let us know in a

typewritten note, and the winner will be rewarded with a copy of ONCE UPON A PUNG by Brent Dickson or ONE TOWN IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS by Brent Dickson and Homer Lucas (winner's choice). Deadline: August 31, 1994.

Vera Laska

Vera Laska received her PhD in American history from the University of Chicago and teaches at Regis College in Weston. She is a freelance writer and lecturer, has columns in several local newspapers and is editor of the Weston Historical Society BULLETIN.

THE HISTORY OF THE WESTON COMMON

The following article has been abbreviated from the brochure "Weston Town Common: A History," written by Nancy M. Fleming and privately printed by the Weston Garden Club on the occasion of its 50th anniversary in 1991. It has been prepared by Vera Laska, the editor of this BULLETIN, with the kind permission of Nancy M. Fleming of the Weston Garden Club.

The Weston Town Common as we know it today is to a large extent a gift we all inherited from some farsighted Weston residents of yesteryear and the master planner of this lovely center-piece of our town, the pioneering landscape architect Arthur A. Shurtleff.

Shurtleff was a disciple of the father of landscape architecture Frederick Law Olmsted, worked under his direction in Olmsted's firm before he made himself independent in 1905 in Boston. Olmsted's firm had several Weston clients, among them Horace S. Sears, who built his dream house called Haleiwa on the Boston Post Road, and the Weston native Arthur L. Coburn, who married a Weston school teacher and built a house near the golf club on Church Street.

Arthur A. Shurtleff (1870-1957) was a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and of Harvard. With his mentor Olmsted, he believed that the stress of modern times could be relieved by placing greenery such as parks, trees and shrubs among the urbanized buildings of towns and cities.

By 1911 wise Weston town fathers established a Town Improvement Committee, funded with $500, to develop the town center into a practical, safe and at the same time esthetic unit. They engaged Shurtleff to come up with a plan.

By the end of the first decade of this century, the town of Weston contained slightly over 2,000 people, (of whom only about 40% were males eligible to vote). The TOWN REPORT for 1910 recorded 436 horses, 774 cows, 4,395 fowl, and 18,847 books in the Public Library.

The old village green evolved with history but without any systematic planning. At the time that Shurtleff submitted his first plan to the town in 1912 at a public hearing, some of the builidngs we are familiar with now stood there, among them the First Parish Church (see photo. 1), the Public Library (see photo. 2), and the Josiah Smith Tavern, sometimes referred to as the Jones House for the name of the last family to have lived there (see photo. 3). Facing the library was the old Town Hall, put to many uses; for instance the Fire Department was in its basement. Nearby stood the Cutting Store and stables (see

photo. 1). The Cutting Store had a window for the post office. This central square was at times a confusing scramble of horses, people, carts, carriages and by 1911, automobiles. There was also a flagpole and an iron watering trough.

1. First Parish Church and Cutting Store (Weston Historical Society)

Shurtleff's several plans showed an evolving central common (see photo. 4). It included the razing of some buildings and the relocation of others. It envisioned a new Fire Station and Town Hall, (see photo. 5) both of which were eventually erected where we can see them now. For the new Town Hall that was to "preside" over the new Weston Common, the town allocated $75,000, and Horace S. Sears added to that another $20,000; it was dedicated on November 27, 1917, with Lt. Governor Calvin Coolidge delivering the inaugural speech.

The plan provided an improved traffic pattern that was more strategically acceptable and safer; meadow lands were drained and changed from swamp to dry land; the town common slowly acquired its own individuality. As Shurtleff wrote to the town of Weston on March 5, 1912:

> The execution of this scheme would give Weston a town common of remarkable individuality and in many respects the finest open space of its kind in the Commonwealth. This plan would also guard the town against congestion at the centre and also avoid further traffic dangers, and at the same time head off the growth of a slum district in the west land behind the present Town-hall.

Truer words were seldom spoken.

2. Weston Public Library, built in 1899
(Weston Historical Society)

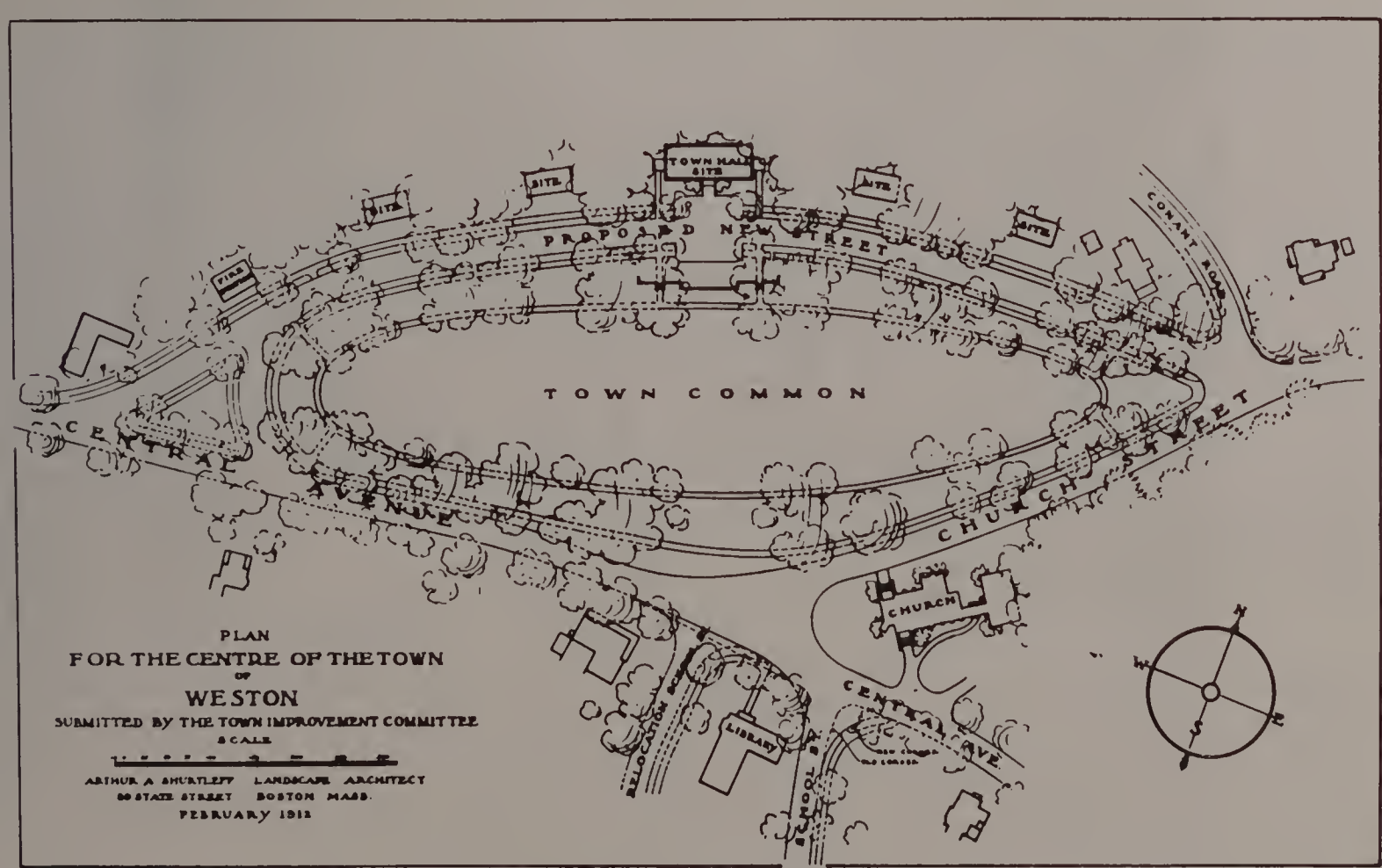
3. Josiah Smith Tavern with the Barn on the left
(Weston Historical Society)

But progress was slowed down by the needs for labor, materials and money for World War I. By the end of the war work picked up again.

Here we want to quote for reasons of historic sentimentality parts of a report of the Park Commissioners, among them Horace S. Sears, Arthur L. Coburn and Benjamin Blake, in December of 1919:

> It was with a certain tinge of sadness that the citizens of the town watched the demolition of the old Town Hall with all its precious associations and memories – or merrymakings and parties – of the exhibitions, and graduation exercises – of the pleasant library room when the library was in its small beginnings – and of patriotic and philanthropic meetings when the walls echoed with eloquent and moving appeals. But it is pleasant to remember that its crowning service was during the last year of its honorable existence, when it offered spacious accommodations for the devoted and energetic labors of the workers for the Red Cross and French Wounded during the great war. And our thoughts cannot but go much further back to the same magnificent work that these walls looked down upon two generations ago when the country was nearly torn asunder by our own Civil War, and the noble patriotic women of this old town worked indefatigably for the comfort and relief of our soldiers whose saving remnant still lives in the Grand Army of the Republic, whom we all venerate and hold in undying gratitude and affectionate regard.

Finally the last touches preparing today's Weston Common were carried out. Care was taken of standing water and shabby grass; retaining walls were removed;



4. Shurtleff's 1912 plan for the Weston Town Common (Town of Weston, Annual Report for 1912)

exposed foundations were obliterated. Shrubbery was planted of native kind, such as common barberry, dogwood, witch hazel and woodbine; the center was planted with good grass. It became indeed a town common of remarkable esthetic value and in many respects, as Shurtleff originally predicted, "the finest open space of its kind in the Commonwealth."

The Weston Garden Club, since its founding in 1941, devoted much tender loving care to the common. While during the war years its members took care of patients in army hospitals, after World War II they planted 500 daffodil bulbs on the south slope of the Town Common; they bloom every spring to the joy of all residents and visitors. In 1948 the Garden Club started the tradition of planting of the old watering trough next to the Common. Its members also carried out plantings around the Town Hall, at the flagpole island, and at the occasion of the town's 250th anniversary in 1963 celebrated by the planting of forty-two white and pink dogwood trees on both sides of Town Hall.

Arthur A. Shurtleff went on to greater projects, such as using his talents as landscape architect at Colonial Williamsburg and at Old Sturbridge Village. In 1930 he Anglicized his name to Shurcliff – but that was long after he had written his name into Weston history with his legacy of the "finest open space of its kind in the Commonwealth."

5. The New Town Hall (1917)
(Photograph by Andrew J. Laska of Weston, 1994)

WESTON'S OLD TAVERNS

Front view of the Golden Ball Tavern. For picture of the Josiah Smith Tavern, see photograph 3 on page 4.

Much of the early history of Weston comes alive with a visit to our two old taverns, the Josiah Smith Tavern and the Golden Ball Tavern, both located in the center of town on the Boston Post Road. Weston is fortunate to have two such venerable structures, carefully preserved, in which local historians have strived to keep the past in proper focus. Each building has a fascinating story to tell and each reveals its secrets in a different way.

Old inns and taverns, often called "ordinaries," were an important and necessary part of daily life in colonial New England. The term "ordinary," derived from the British, meant a place where all guests were served "ordinary" fare or a standard meal at a fixed price.

As early as 1634, towns were beginning to issue licenses to innkeepers, often the local magistrate, justice of the peace, or sheriff. It was actually mandatory in those times for each town to provide accommodations for travelers as well as their livestock, and there were strict laws governing them. Regulating the consumption and sale of "spirits" was one of the main concerns of town officials. One old tavern sign, for instance, spelled out such restrictions saying "a cupp each man at dynner & supp & no more."

With the advent of the stagecoach, more and more inns and taverns began to spring up along the "post" roads that linked New England towns and cities together. Not only were the taverns or ordinaries a haven for weary travelers, but they were the social and political gathering places for the local population as well.

Throughout the events leading up to the Revolutionary War, the town taverns often became a hotbed of clandestine activities. They were frequently the rallying ground for the local militia, and as such, were often visited by spies, both Patriots and Tories, who dropped by in hopes of obtaining some important bits of information.

Both the Josiah Smith and the Golden Ball Taverns had their share of covert activities and "spy" incidents during this period. It was a well-known fact that Isaac Jones,

proprietor of the Golden Ball Tavern and a Tory sympathizer, had, on several occasions, harbored British spies. Townspeople, especially the "liberty boys," did not take kindly to this fact.

The story that best illustrates Isaac's tenuous position in town has been called "the Weston Tea Party,"which occurred in 1774, three months after the famous Boston Tea Party. Isaac Jones had ignored the Patriot ban on tea and continued to sell it to his customers. In March of 1774, an enraged mob stormed the tavern, "ransacked the whole House from Cellar to Garret" and "made free with the Bottles of Liquor in the Cellar." Pressure was soon brought to bear on Isaac, who eventually changed his views, apologized, and joined the cause.

The Josiah Smith Tavern, on the other hand, was a popular gathering place for Patriots, and it was here that a British spy, Sargent John Howe, paid a visit on April 5, 1775. He had been sent from Boston on a scouting mission by General Gage to check the roads, bridges and crossings between Boston and Worcester and to find out what he could about the local sentiments. Howe's disguise did not fool innkeeper Joel Smith, nor some of the local "liberty boys" standing about. After giving him a cup of rum and molasses, Smith quickly sent him on his way to keep him from being "tarred and feathered" by the suspicious men. (Howe, like Isaac Jones, was eventually to switch his allegiance to the Patriots' cause.)

The Josiah Smith Tavern, built in 1757, is the oldest structure in the town center. The large, white, rambling building with a gambrel roof, a lean-to, and an attached barn, overlooks the town green. The main part of the house has two rooms displaying Weston artifacts and furnishings and is the headquarters for the Weston Historical Society. Members of the Museum Committee are currently updating and cataloguing the Society's vast collection of records and memorabilia but welcome visitors on Wednesdays from 10-12 a.m. Other rooms in this town-owned building are used as town offices and for meetings by local organizations. The attached barn, restored and furnished by the Women's Community League of Weston, Inc., is rented by them and used for their meetings and activities. Visitors are welcome on Tuesdays when "The Clothing Exchange," a busy, fashionable, consignment shop, is in full swing and lunch is served.

The Golden Ball Tavern ceased operation as an inn and tavern in 1793 but remained as a residence to the Jones family until 1964. At that time it was acquired by the newly formed Golden Ball Trust. The mission of the Trust was to establish a museum "to present, illustrate, and teach the architectural, artistic, and social changes over the 200 years of the Isaac Jones family occupation of the tavern." It remains today a unique archeological and historic museum, with furnished period rooms showing changes made by six generations of the same family. Many educational programs and special events centering on colonial life are held throughout the year. The museum is open for guided tours from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m., Wednesdays and Sundays, from April to November.

While "fine vittles and drink and a kleen bed" are no longer available at either the Josiah Smith or the Golden Ball Taverns, they are both still well worth a visit.

Mary Maynard has lived in Weston for 38 years and has been active in many local organizations. She currently chairs the Historians' Committee at the First Parish Church and is on the Board of Directors of the Weston Historical Society. She is the author of a series of Yankee Guide Books focusing on New England, and parts of the above article are excerpted from her latest book, HOUSES WITH STORIES, released in March, 1994 by Yankee Books.

OUR OLD HOUSE - A REMEMBRANCE

Our old house at 465 South Avenue, once called South County Road, used to be named Train's Tavern. One can imagine the smoke coming from the burning logs in the fireplace mixing with that of the customers' pipes... This was not an inn where one spent the night, but rather what we would call a pub.

Drovers on their way East, farmers from Boston with empty wagons but full purses, would relax and feel free to talk with their friends about politics, farming or whatever the local gossip might have brought up, concerning perhaps a leading citizen whose love for a maiden was not requited.

This ancient house was built in 1802 by Isaac Train. It proudly wears a round plaque that testifies that it is among the fifty oldest houses in Weston. We bought the place in 1946, when I returned from the Air Force after World War II. I collected my family in Minneapolis and returned to New England. Our daughter experienced her first birthday in this house.

The old house, so full of memories

With its seven fireplaces, chair railings and low ceilings, it was easy, during candlelight suppers, to imagine hearing the farmers hitching their horses to the posts, covering their animals against the bitter cold, and crashing through the front door of the tavern, shaking snow off their thick coats and boots, boisterously greeting old friends, backing to the warm fire, and ordering a draft of cider, or if with a full purse, a drink of hot rum.

We lived there almost forty years... had a son, then a horse for our daughter, and a small flower garden for all of us...

I look back on our residence in this old house, our first, with great pleasure and with some sadness. Sitting before the fire on a cold winter evening during peaceful family times, before television... at Christmas all seven mantels decorated cheerfully... or relaxing on our porch on a hot summer evening, with the smell of lilacs in the air... It all seems like a dream without reality.

But it was there, and so were we, once, oh, so long ago.

George Frazee Amadon

George F. Amadon is a native of Framingham. During World War II he served in the Pacific as senior gunner in a B-29, with 37 missions over Japan. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross and a Purple Heart. He is author of the book The Rise of the Ironclads (1988, now in its third printing). His civilian career included national marketing with the Howard Johnson Co. and retailing with the Sears-Roebuck Co. He has lived in Weston since 1946 and is working on a second book.

THE TWO WESTON FLAGPOLES

During my years in Weston – and I have lived here since 1951 – the town has owned two flagpoles. Both of their existences have involved the late Ralph Woodworth, a lifelong resident of Weston.

The first flagpole stood on the site of the present one. It was erected as a World War I memorial. The tree from which the 100-110 foot pole was manufactured was shipped via the Panama Canal to Boston, where it was tooled in the Boston shipyard that used to make masts for sailing ships. At its completion, it was the longest single piece pole in the country. Because of transportation difficulties in those days, the pole had to be shipped to Portsmouth in New Hampshire, then overland to Weston. There the proud flagpole stood until Tuesday, June 25, 1968.

It was in the late 1940s that Ralph Woodworth was observing the painting of the flagpole. The painter had been hoisted aloft in a chair-like contraption to perform this operation. Suddenly there was a cry, and camera in hand, Mr. Woodworth snapped the photograph of the unfortunate painter as he hurtled to the ground. The picture of this incident appeared on the front page of the Boston Herald. The painter, though injured, survived to tell the tale. Thus ended Mr. Woodworth's involvement number one.

It was approximately twenty years later, that Mr. Woodworth became involved a second time in the story of the Weston flagpole. This was on a sultry Tuesday in June, 1968. Dark, threatening clouds appeared from the West, and shortly after that, a bolt of lightning felled the magnificent flagpole. Ralph Woodworth headed up an ad hoc committee of patriotic residents to raise money and purchase a new pole.

He approached the Board of Selectmen, chaired by "Bud" Koester, with a proposal to duplicate the tall Douglas fir pole and to restore the original bronze eagle to its top. Donald W. Pigeon, president of the Pigeon Hollow Company, estimated the total cost of the project from beginning to end to come to $8,045. At a Special Town Meeting held in December of that year, the town voted to appropriate the necessary funds for the restoration of the flagpole.

During the years 1969-1970, Mr. Woodworth was instrumental in obtaining an American flag from the famous World War II battleship Missouri. It is a huge flag, and it may be observed on national holidays flying from the 110 foot Douglas fir flagpole next to the Town Hall.

Samuel R. Payson

Samuel R. Payson, a longtime Weston resident, retired from a career as an insurance broker. He is a charter member of the Weston Historical Society. Morris Earl, also a Weston resident, helped with tracking down some of the facts and figures for this article.

INTRODUCING: SABRA L. JONES

Sabra L. Jones, whose four generations of Jones family Weston roots go back to the 1800s, is the new President of the Weston Historical Society. Sabra, having been born and raised in Weston, graduated from Weston High School in 1978. Recruited as a competitive springboard diver to Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, she graduated in 1982 with her B.A. in Political Science. Subsequently Sabra returned to Weston for a family trip around the world, then attended Boston University School of Law from which she earned her Juris Doctor degree in 1986. After years as a trial associate with a greater Boston law firm, in 1990 Sabra returned to Weston to succeed to the practice of her father, Aubrey E. Jones (disabled for health reasons), and to expand her own practice within the firm of Jones & Jones. In 1993, she merged Jones & Jones with another local attorney, Jonathan A. White, of Freeman & White, to form the firm of Jones & White for the purpose of continuing to engage in a broad general practice of law, including litigation, from their offices at 30 Colpitts Road.

Active in a variety of town matters, Sabra has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Weston Historical Society since 1989, as the Society's Secretary from 1990-1993, and since November of 1993 as the Society's President. Similarly, in 1990 she was one of the first two women to be inducted simultaneously into the Rotary Club of Weston and, as of July 1994, will become the first woman ever to serve as its President.

Professionally, she is a member of the Massachusetts Bar Association and lectures, on a regular, monthly basis, at the U.S. Small Business Association's S.C.O.R.E. workshops concerning "The Legal Aspects of Starting Your Own Business."

In her rare spare time Sabra enjoys historical novels and documentaries, skiing, golf, horseback riding, volleyball and more recently, fly fishing. Most importantly, however, Sabra takes great satisfaction in perpetuating the extended Jones family's legacy of public service to our beloved town.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Unfortunately, the Weston Historical Society's BULLETIN has not been published for the last two and a half years. Our last issue was dated August, 1991; it was Volume XXIV, No. 3.

We are now resuming the publication of the BULLETIN. This is the Spring, 1994 issue, Volume XXV, No. 1. For the time being, we shall publish two issues per year, Spring and Fall. Members will automatically receive the BULLETIN by mail.

You might notice some changes in the BULLETIN. On the one hand, editorial policy will be somewhat stricter, approximating a more academic documentation; on the other hand, the philosophy behind the contents will be more liberal, by which we mean that we shall try to open windows to humor and include more articles dealing with people and their stories, about their laughter and their tears. Both prose and poetry will qualify. Articles will be written not only by professional and amateur historians but also by YOU, our members.

This then is an appeal and invitation to one and all, members and/or non-members, to put on your writing caps and search your memories for interesting vignettes from your lives in Weston. Between cradle and grave, there must be hundreds of stories floating around: a funny or tragic incident that happened in school, yesterday or years ago; your cat stuck in a tree (which reminds me to write about the raccoon stuck in our bedroom a few years ago), a sentimental journey, a never to be forgotten friend. All these tales are colorful little stones that make up the mosaic of our history.

Do not think that you can not write. Just take that paper and pen and tell it as it was, as if you were talking to a friend. And remember: whatever happened yesterday is HISTORY!

If you send us an article, always keep a copy for yourself. The Editorial Board reserves the right to print or not to print your contribution and also to edit it. It should be one to eight pages long, typed, double spaced, with one inch margins. Please indicate your sources in footnotes on the same page if you are quoting from letters, books, documents or interviews. Photographs are very welcome and must be identified: who, when, where is depicted on them, possibly also who took them and when. Naturally, if you are telling your own story, no footnotes are necessary. At the end include your name, address and telephone number, and a sentence or two about yourself. We can return manuscripts only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Send you contributions to The Editor, Weston Historical Society BULLETIN, Box 343, Weston, MA 02193.

For your information, the members of the Editorial Board are: Frederick A. Crafts III., Mary Maynard, Samuel Payson and Joseph Verovsek.

Dr. Vera Laska, Editor

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Membership dues: Individual $10, family $15, life $250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at $2 each by mailing payment to the Society.

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Fall, 1994 Volume XXV, No. 2

THE 250th ANNIVERSARY OF ABIGAIL ADAMS' BIRTHDAY

Abigail Smith Adams and John Adams, two years after their marriage
pastel by Benjamin Blyth, 1766

This year we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of Abigail Smith Adams' birthday. She was born in Weymouth on November 11, 1744. She was an outspoken, witty and logical person. With her husband John Adams she left us the most copious and most informative correspondence of her times, offering us a mosaic of all facets of life before, during and after the American Revolution. It is only appropriate that the Weston Historical Society commemorated this outstanding First Lady, wife of the second and mother of the sixth president, with an evening of vignettes from her life. (See next story).

ABIGAIL ADAMS AMONG US

On May 5th, 1994, the Weston Historical Society gathered to a festive dinner, as is the custom by now, at the Student Union lounge of Regis College. Instead of a speaker, we were treated to a one woman play, a reading and recitation of the letters exchanged during the Revolutionary War between John Adams and his wife, Abigail.

The author of the text, written as a play, but presented to us only in excerpts, is Janine Perry; her play is called "The Distance Between Us." She gave the readings of John Adams' letters and also provided the connecting text spanning the chronological distances between their missives.

Abigail Adams was represented by Vicki Summers, an actress who during the day teaches deaf children. She was dressed in period costume and did an excellent job of portraying Abigail, which is not an easy task. Abigail Adams could be romantic or businesslike, submissive or imperial, and all the time she was sparkling with new ideas of all sorts. Miss Summers did a splendid job.

We heard of Abigail's longing for her "Dear Friend." She reported on the comings and goings at home in Weymouth and Braintree, while John Adams was in Philadelphia at the two Continental Congresses. Included was, of course, the most famous citation from Abigail's letter to her husband just before the Declaration of Independence: "Remember the Ladies!" Abigail wanted Congress to give women some rights. But John Adams, forever the conservative, replied that her words made him laugh! While he personally admired and respected his wife's opinions, he would not budge to give all women rights. Abigail then complained to her dear friend Mercy Otis Warren, that perhaps women should follow Lysistrata's ways and deny uxorial rights to men!

Since I am an aficionada of Abigail Adams, I missed several passages that should have been included, for instance the note from John to Abigail at the time of their courting when he demanded kisses from her:

> Miss Adorable: By the same token that the bearer hereof sat up with you last night, I hereby order you to give him as many kisses and as many hours of your company after 9 o'clock as he shall please to demand and charge them to my account ... I presume I have good right to draw upon you for the kisses as I have given two or three million at least, when one has been received, and of consequence the account between us is immensely in favor of yours, John Adams. (*The Adams Papers. Adams Family Correspondence,* 4 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965, I., p. 2).

This would have placed John in a softer light, as he was a rather sentimental person when it came to his feelings for his wife. But you can squeeze only so much into a one hour presentation.

All in all it was a delightful evening; the food, the service and the visit from Abigail made the well attended dinner a great success.

Vera Laska

ON TEACHING HISTORY

"Kids know so little about the past."
"They all have opinions and attitudes, but no knowledge!"
"How do you compete with MTV?"
"How do you teach history these days?"

When people find out that I teach high school history, they often ask questions that express concern about the state of education in general and history in particular. We are all too aware that we are entering a new age where what seemed to be the old certainties of the Cold War, the traditional family, and American economic dominance, no longer apply. We all have opinions. We all want the best for our children.

Since the publication of "A Nation at Risk" in 1983 with its sobering prediction that the country might soon be swallowed by a "rising tide of mediocrity," education has become a permanent fixture on the national agenda. We have all heard horror stories. More and more is being jammed into the curriculum, but is something valuable being lost in the process?

Particularly troubling is the fate of history. The Bradley Commission reports that currently 15 percent of our students do not take any American history in high school, and at least 50 percent do not study either World History or Western Civilization. This is disturbing to a generation raised on reading Aldous Huxley, George Orwell and Ray Bradbury and their visions of dictatorships controlling or eliminating knowledge of the past. Are we in danger of bringing up a generation without historical memory?

History and social studies teaching at Weston reflects these national concerns. While Weston has incorporated many changes in its curriculum over the years, a recent favorable review of the kindergarten through high school program concluded that more change is needed. The curriculum was criticized as being too centered on the United States and to a lesser degree on Western civilization. We were encouraged to be more daring in developing varied and imaginative approaches to teaching. The world we live in is global. It looks much different than a few years ago, much less a generation ago. The world's population centers are not in the West. The expanding role of China, India and Brazil emphasizes our need to understand these countries and their cultures. Headlines in our newspapers cannot be understood without knowledge of Africa and the Balkans. We need to understand Islam and its shared heritage of the Judeo-Christian tradition if we are to come to terms with events in the Middle East, or even to come to terms with ourselves. Our own population's changing diversity and our continuing history as an immigrant nation reminds us that we cannot isolate ourselves. The world is in our backyard. We are a multiethnic, multicultural society.

In dealing with curriculum changes, there are no simple answers. In many ways one confronts paradoxes. We need to teach more about the world and more about the United States, especially its recent history. We must not neglect local history. We need to emphasize multicultural education as well as understand the dominant culture. We need to study a few historical episodes in depth and we need the broad survey. We need to emphasize the role of minorities and understand the contributions of mainstream figures. We need to build skills and also build a common body of references and allusions to the past. We need more time for the courses we do have and we need to give students more choices and electives. We need academic rigor and we need to provide for individual

differences. The list could continue. Now all these goals are not necessarily contradictory, but they do point to real problems. Priorities need to be set. A failure to set priorities has led to textbooks so crammed with topics that they deal with none of them adequately.

What does this mean in practice? The Weston history department has to set priorities as it continues to evolve its curriculum. In the first place we are committed to the premise that students have different learning styles. Howard Gardner's *Frames of the Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* finds that human cognition involves more than just verbal/linguistic abilities that are typically the focus of schools. Opportunities need to be provided to allow all of the seven intelligences that Gardner identifies to come into play. The World History course is currently using the Islam unit from the Teachers Curriculum Institute which is based on Gardner's work. Teachers strive to utilize a variety of methods in all their courses to respond to the variety of learning styles of our students.

This also means that we need to become more interdisciplinary in our approach. When we discuss the influence of Spencer and Social Darwinism on the Gilded Age, there is an obvious opportunity to collaborate with the Science department. What better way to experience the emotional impact of slavery and the effects of Reconstruction, than to read Toni Morrison's *Beloved*? Taking an historical approach seriously also means using contemporaneous literature as well and blurring the distinctions between the two. This helps illuminate the connections between subjects.

In every course difficult choices must be made, or else more will become less. This is especially true in courses where the subject is as vast as world history. History involves analyzing change across time. This is most adequately grasped by selecting episodes as specifically as possible. "Postholes" need to be "dug." We want to remember that according to Homer and Herodotus, history began as stories around the campfire. It is human gossip. We want to make history human. It is much better to study industrialization by reading sections of Robert Owens *Memoirs,* than by talking about the Industrial Revolution in the abstract.

This means that such traditional skills as writing and research are not neglected, but emphasized as one of the best ways to learn to think precisely and critically. Fifteen years ago, we accepted the responsibility of being the department that teaches expository writing. For example, all United States history students spend a quarter learning how to use a variety of resources and writing a research paper The process involves doing notecards, outlines, introductions and rough drafts before the finished copy. A sampling of recent topics include: Freedom of Religion and the Church of Later Day Saints, Medicine in America-Doctors Rise to the Pedestal, The Cholera and Influenza Epidemic, The Real Life of Cowboys in America, and Segregation and the Policies of Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois and Marcus Garvey. Another project on the Coal Strike of 1902 was outstanding in its use of newspaper articles to follow the course of the strike and role of the president. Another student started with our school library's complete set of *Time* and followed up by using *The New York Times* to chart America's Reaction to the Rise of Hitler. This requires tremendous commitment but as Theodore Sizer says: "Even in hotshot high schools, the quality of students' writing makes it clear that something is wrong. Kids need to write and rewrite and rewrite. That takes time."

Giving students the opportunity to make choices and select topics is also important. The research paper is just one example of where this happens. Another thing which helps

students understand the nature of history is the oral history report based on interviews. Students have spoken to such figures as Archibald Cox, Charles Colson and Warren Rudman and interviewed Spanish Civil War participants (in Spain), Woodstock attendees, Black Panther members, Civil Rights workers and Vietnam veterans.

A curriculum for the 21st century is still based on the traditional importance of providing the bedrock skills and knowledge vital for all citizens in a democracy. Yet today we need to do this from a global perspective. Students need to understand the diversity of peoples and cultures and their shared humanity. They need to study how peoples differ across time and space, yet share common background and aspirations. Diversity and sharing are the key themes that animate the curriculum.

We tend to forget with all the talk about the lessons of Vietnam dominating our current foreign policy debates and the centrality of that war in many adults' experiences, that Vietnam seems as distant to most students as World War I does to us. A Weston first grader's personal history begins in 1988 and a high school senior's in 1976.

History also develops habits of mind that help us put the present into context and develop an all important sense of perspective. Over a hundred years ago, the National Education Association appointed a committee to examine the entire high school experience as the country underwent a sea of change and prepared itself for the 20th century. In 1892, the subcommittee of History, Civil Government, and Political Economy criticized the traditional curriculum and traditional teaching methods and recommended that all students, whether or not they were college bound, should take four years of history on the secondary level. It declared that history taught by the newer methods would "broaden and cultivate the mind; that they counteract a narrow and provincial spirit; that they prepare the pupil in an eminent degree for enlightenment and the intellectual enjoyment in after years; and that they assist him to exercise a salutary effect upon the affairs of his country."

Sound familiar?

Joseph A. Verovsek

Joseph A. Verovsek received his B.A. degree from Gonzaga University and his M.A. from the University of Nebraska. He has been a member of the faculty in the Department of History of the Weston High School since 1969.

ISSAC FISKE LAW OFFICE

The Fiske Law Office in Weston, June 1994

Along the stretch of the old Boston Post Road between the Weston and Wayland centers, within little more than a mile of each other, stand three small and quite similar historical buildings. They were all built in the early part of the nineteenth century and each has clapboard siding painted white, black shutters, a hipped roof, and a central chimney which divides each building into two tiny rooms (The Weston building has an addition from around 1920). These were the law offices of three prominent lawyers. Issac Fiske (1778-1861), Alpheus Bigelow Jr. (1784-1863), and Edward Mellon (1802-1875) who practiced their profession in this area in the early 1800s.

It was not uncommon at that time for lawyers to build themselves a separate little building close to their home but far enough away from the daily hubbub of household activities. There are, in fact, a number of these small structures to be seen all over New England. Almost thirty years ago our former president and founding member of the Weston Historical Society, Harold G. "Red" Travis, undertook an extensive research project on these small buildings and wrote about them in the May 1967 edition of the *Bulletin* (Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 1-2). At that time he discovered that there were at least twelve others still standing in New England and all of them, including those on the Post Road, were built between 1754 ad 1826.

What we now call the Isaac Fiske Law Office was originally built about 1805 for Artemus Ward, Jr., son of the famous Revolutionary War general who served on

Washington's staff. Fiske became a partner of Ward's in 1806, and when, a few years later, Ward decided to move his practice to Concord, he turned the law office over to Fiske. Isaac Fiske quickly distinguished himself not only in the community, but in the state as well, becoming known as "the leading lawyer of Middlesex County." He served for 24 years as Town Clerk, six years as Selectman, and six years as representative to the General Court.

The Fiske Law Office remained in the hands of his descendents for many years and was at one point made into a single dwelling. At one time it was used as a playhouse for young children in town and resounded with games and activities as well as birthday parties. The rear ell, which was an old shed attached to Isaac Fiske's Barn, diagonally across the street from the office, was added around 1920. The buidling was eventually sold to the town in 1928 by Fiske heirs.

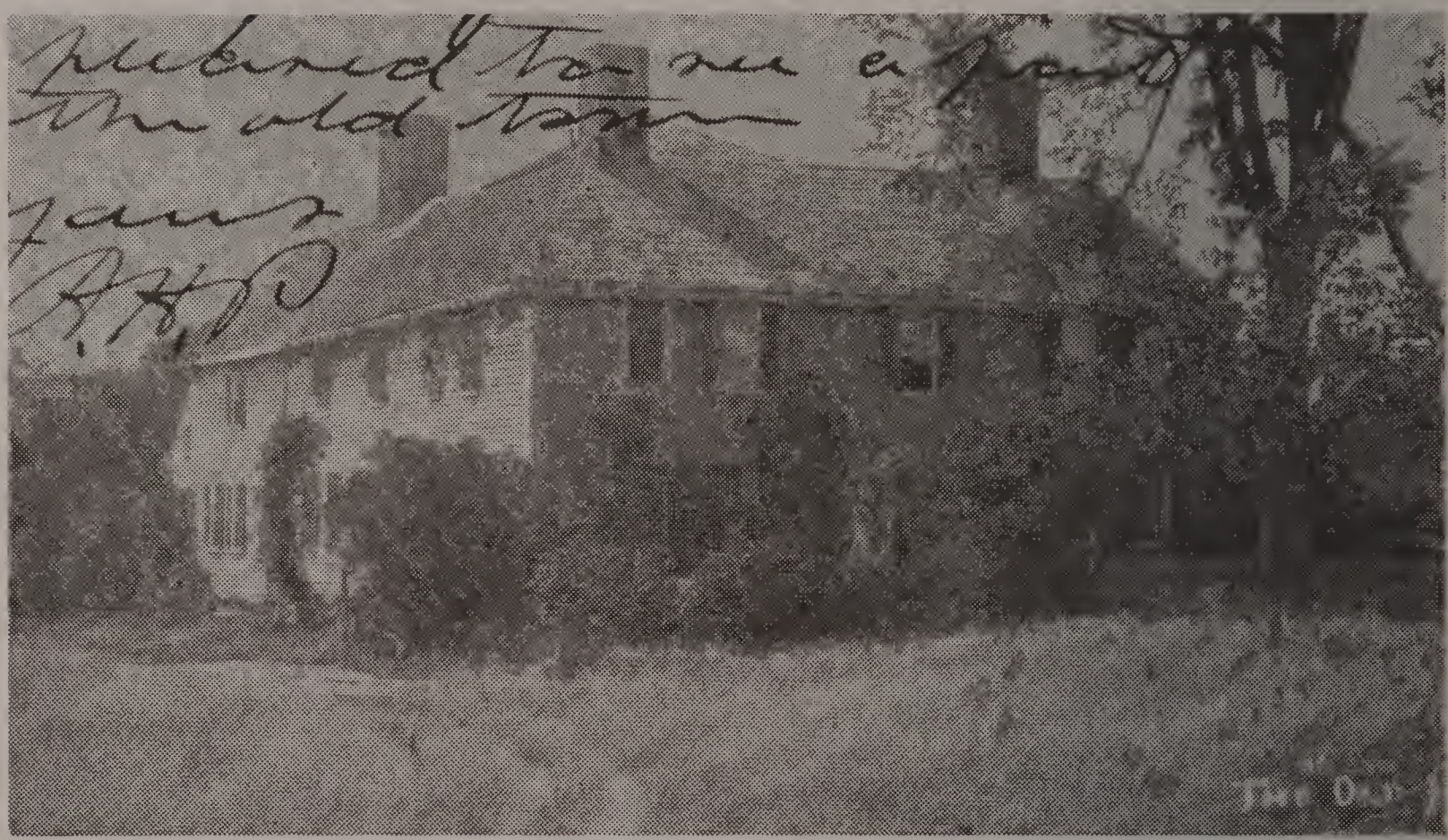
In 1967 the newly formed Weston Historical Society sought and was granted by the town the use of the law office for its headquarters. The building was in very bad repair and the Society immediately launched a massive restoration project. Professionals worked on the reconstruction of deteriorated underpinnings while members volunteered their time to paper and paint each room. One member, Mrs. Harold Travis, hooked a detailed stair carpeting which depicts many local historical sites and it remains to this day one of the building's most charming features. The rooms were furnished with antiques donated by members, including a few original pieces of furniture belonging to Isaac Fiske: a stand-up desk, his law books and his portrait.

The building served for many years as headquarters for the Weston Historical Society until the organization was able to move into larger quarters at the Josiah Smith Tavern. Since then the Society has continued to keep the law office open to the public on Memorial Day and on other special occasions. Severe winter storms over the past few years, however, have done considerable damage to the building, resulting in the law office being closed down. The Society is once again launching a new restoration project to repair damages. The furnishings have been put into temporary storage while the work is being done. As soon as professional repairs have been made, it is hoped that members will once again pitch in to help restore this precious treasure.

Mary Maynard

HISTORY OF THE BURLEIGH MANSION

Newmarket, New Hampshire and Weston, Massachusetts*



The Burleigh Mansion in Newmarket, New Hampshire

The Burleigh Mansion in Weston, Massachusetts at 100 Orchard Avenue

* Since numerical superscripts have to be used to designate generations of the Burley/Burleigh family, regular footnotes are exceptionally designated with letters of the alphabet. This is a revised and abridged edition of a longer manuscript, which contains further photographs and maps as well as the inventory of Lt. John Burleigh's estate. This longer original is filed at the Weston Public Library, Weston history collection, as well as at the Weston Historical Society Museum.

The Burleigh Mansion has an unusual history that begins in Newmarket, New Hampshire and ends in Weston, Massachusetts. A large white house, it was built in Newmarket by Lieutenant John Burleigh in the mid-eighteenth century. It remained in the family for four more generations, nearly two-hundred years.

Newmarket was originally part of Exeter[a], the name given to the settlement made in 1638 by Reverend John Wheelright and his followers. Wheelwright had come from England to Boston in 1936; he was soon chosen to be pastor of the church at Mount Wollaston (Braintree). His religious opinions, however, differed from those of the intolerant Boston church. After much debate among the elders of the church, he was charged with sedition for a sermon he preached in January, 1637. In November the Court found Wheelwright guilty, pronouncing a sentence of disfranchisement and banishment. He was allowed fourteen days to leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony[b] (Winthrop, *Journal,* vol. i, pp. 195-241).

In April 1638, Rev. Wheelwright and a few others purchased a large tract of land from Wehanownowit, an Indian sagamore (chief). The Indians retained rights to "hunt & fish & foul" within the limits of the land which reached from the Merrimac River to the Piscataqua River. The following year the settlers wrote a "combination" [pact] in which they formally established themselves as inhabitants of Exeter, desiring to combine in their common interest of establishing a civil government. (Bell, pp. 3-9; Fitts, pp. 12-13)

The land on which the Burleigh Mansion was built was part of an original land grant to Moses Gilman in 1674. Moses Gilman was born in England in 1630. He was a resident of Exeter in 1648 and in 1652 he and his father were accepted as inhabitants[c] of the town. Active in town affairs, Gilman served several times as a selectman of Exeter. He died around 1700.

It is not clear how this tract of land made its way in the Burleigh Family, who first acquired land in Exeter in 1698-99[d]. Giles[1] Burley emigrated from England and settled in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Two of his sons, James[2] and Andrew[2] acquired land at Bayside in present day Newmarket on the east side of the country road leading from Exeter north to Durham which eventually came into the possession of James[3] and John[3] Burley, their respective sons. The property on which the house was built lay west of this road and is first mentioned in 1748 when Joseph[3] Burley (James[3]'s brother) conveyed 22 acres and 100 square rods to his son Joseph[4]. It is described as "being part of the Grant of Land Com'only Call'd Moses Gilmans Grant." The following year, the northeast 12 acres of this land were bought by John[4] Burley (son of John[3]). There is no mention of buildings in either deed. (37:138; 52:96-98).*

John[4] Burley was a blacksmith by trade but rose to a position of prominence in the community and after 1760 his name is spelled Burleigh. In fact, he was referred to thereafter as Lieutenant Burleigh. He was twice a selectman of Newmarket and several times representataive to the New Hampshire legislature. He was among 164 signers of the Association Test, July 12, 1776 — a resolution recommended by the Continental Congress:

* References to the Registry of Deeds are indicated in parentheses (Volume: page); unless otherwise noted, they are from the Rockingham Country Registry of Deeds in Exeter or Concord, New Hampshire. The same form applies to Probate records.

> We, the subscribers, do hereby solemly engage, and promise that we will, to the utmost in our Power, at the Risque of our Lives and Fortunes, and Arms, oppose the Hostile Proceedings of the British Fleets and Armies, against the United American Colonies. (Fitts, p. 110, 243)

Lt. John Burleigh married three times, fathering thirteen children in all. He married his first wife, Sarah Hall, in 1740. She died in 1757[e], and John married Elizabeth Chesley, 17 years his junior, six months later. Both of their children died in infancy. After Elizabeth's death, it was again just six months before John married Mehitable Sheafe. Mehitable, fourteen years younger than John, was the daughter of Sampson and Sarah (Walton) Sheafe of Newcastle (formerly Great Island). Mehitable and John had six children:

Mehitable[5], b. 1763, d. unm.[d], March 23, 1847
Mary[5], b. 1765, d. 1781 or 1791
Elizabeth[5], b. 1767, m. 1784 Daniel Hill, d. 1845
Henry[5], b. 1768, m. Elizabeth Rogers
Margaret[5], b. 1770, m. George Frost, d. 1846
Marcia[5], b. 1772, m. 1794 Ezra Smith, d. Maine 1859 (Fitts, pp. 455-6).

Lt. Burleigh is generally recognized for building the Mansion house, which was located between Pine Hill and Great Hill on the Country Road (Exeter Street). The exact date is not known but it was probably built during the 1750s. It has been reported that parts of the house date from the late seventeenth century, yet that is unlikely since there were no buildings on the property when it was purchased by Burleigh in 1749. The possibility remains, however, that Burleigh had an older structure moved to the site to which he then added. Nellie Palmer George gives the following description of the house:

> The rooms were finely wainscotted. Fifty imported Dutch tile adorned the fireplace of the best room (the north parlor). The wallpaper was brought from overseas. Under the capacious cellar were two wine cellars. These were entered by a trap door and stairs leading down sixteen feet below. Here were stored the rum and wine bought of Shadrach Walton, wine merchant of Great Island [Mehitable's grandfather] ...

George also tells the story of the haunted room:

> It was a very serious and disturbing thing to Mehitable and her family to find that the house was haunted. This state of things could not long be endured. The ghostly presence of the departed second wife disturbed the harmony of the home. The Rev. John Moody was called, and he with solemn ceremony and prayer, laid the ghost, assigning it to the northeast chamber. The shutters were closed and the room sealed. It is said that the seal was not broken for more than a hundred years. Modern psychology would associate Mehitable and her haunted house with her great-grandfather, George Walton, of Great Island, and the stone throwing demon that Mather tells us about in his Magnalia.[f]

Her description of the room is equally valid today as then:

> In this house the northeast chamber ... was indeed unusual in construction and finish. The floor, walls, door, ceiling and inside window-shutters were all of one kind of wood, guiltless of varnish or paint and dark with age. When the inside

window-blinds were drawn and the door shut the room was like a large, square box with the cover on, so not a ray of light could enter, a dismal place for even a "ghost" to be "laid," and strangely in contrast with the light and cheerfulness of the other rooms. (George, pp 21-22,53).

Lt. John Burleigh[4] was an enterprising man and purchased for himself and his workmen West India rum and molasses by the hogshead.[g] (Fitts, p.110) "Dried fish from the Squamscott and salted alewives[h] from the Lamprey were sent to the West Indies. The return cargo brough whale oil, molasses and rum." (George, p.27) There is still an iron ring on the ceiling of the front hall by which the hogsheads were lowered through the trapdoor below into the cellar. Lt. Burleigh's blacksmith shop was later used as a carriage house. The road used to go to the east around Pine Hill with the schoolhouse standing near the top of the hill. Presently, as Highway 108, it passes over Pine Hill (Burleigh, Charles, M.D., 1894, p. 9; Fitts, p. 110; George, p. 27).

Lt. John Burleigh[4] died on November 18, 1776. The inventory of his estate included: "The Mansion House, Barn and other Buildings (including the barn oposite [sic] & Fields & Pasture the W. side the [sic] Road adjoining [said] Mansion House, say 150 Acres." There was no will; the estate was administered in 1791 by his widow, Mehitable, who died in 1802. In a division of the estate made in 1803, the Widow's Dower or "thirde" was divided into nine parts among the surviving children. The eldest daughter, Mehitable[5] Burleigh, received 15 acres of land containing "the Mansion House other Buidlings and the Barn on the oposite side of the Country Road; also another piece of five acres (Probate I: 4311).

Major Daniel Hill and Elizabeth[5] Burleigh Hill resided on the Burleigh homestead with Mehitable[5]. Among their eleven children were:

Elizabeth[6] (or Betsey) (b. 1789)
Mary[6] (b. 1792)
Nathaniel R.[6] (b. 1796)
Sarah Ann[6] (b. 1806) (Fitts, pp. 548-9)

Mehitable[5] Burleigh had an excellent education. She lived in the Mansion unmarried until her death a month before her 84th birthday in 1847. Upon her decease, the House and other property were divided in the following manner:

— the west end of the house to the niece, Sarah Ann[6] Hill
— the room where Elizabeth[5] had lived to her sister, Marcia Burleigh[5] Smith
— the north half of the old part of the House to Marcia[5] Smith and her heirs
— the south half of the old house and one half of her lands in Newmarket not willed to others to her niece, Elizabeth (Betsey)[6] Hill
— one half of all her lands in Newmarket not willed to others to her nephew, Nathaniel R.[6] Hill.

Mehitable's nephews Nathaniel R.[6] Hill and William P.[6] Frost were named executors of her estate (Burleigh, 1880, pp. 18-9; Probate #15301).

In a deed dated soon after Mehitable Burleigh's death, the executors, Hill and Frost, conveyed to Elizabeth[6] Hill all the land and buildings belonging to the estate. There were two tracts of land: one of 35 acres including the House and 15 acres of wood lot. Elizabeth bought the farm for the sum of $1,565 "at a public vendue held at the house of the late Mehitable Burleigh in Newmarket, 27 September AD 1847 at noon." Elizabeth Hill sold

one-half of this property to her brother Nathaniel R.[6] Hill for the sum of $782.50. She sold the other half interest to him in 1849 for $1,000, reserving about one acre which they continued to hold in common. Like her Aunt Mehitable[5], Elizabeth[6] was a spinster woman and she lived with Nathaniel[6] and his family in the old house which was located on that one acre (330:60; 329:293; 340:412).

Elizabeth[6] Hill died at the homestead on July 1, 1867. Her eleven heirs, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews, inherited her share of the piece of land which included the Mansion House. In 1867, these interestes were conveyed to her brother, Nathaniel R.[6] Hill, who then possessed the whole of the late Mehitable Burleigh's Farm (420:327).

In his will of 1861, Nathaniel[6] devised all his personal estate and his real estate to his wife Esther and appointed her sole executrix. His wish was that upon her death, each of their four children would inherit equal shares of the estate. Nathaniel R.[6] Hill died in 1878, and his widow, Esther Ely Hill, in 1889, but the real estate had apparently already been conveyed to their children: Esther E.[7], Nathaniel E.[7], Charles E.[7] and Mary E.[7] Hill. The eldest daughter, Esther[7] Hill Tebbetts, received title to the property by deeds from her sister (1887) and brothers (1891) (Probate #2650½ N.S., 164:257; Probate #6103 N.S.; 181:247; 500:450; 519:386).

Esther[7] and her husband, Oliver Tebbetts, had one son, Frank Oliver[8] Tebbetts, who administered and inherited his mother's estate upon her death in 1900. (Probate #10521 N.S.; 212:207) Frank O.[8] Tebbetts was a railroad conductor and the last member of the Burleigh family to reside in the house. As a boy, Alfred Brisson used to make deliveries from his father's store to the Tebbetts' place. He remembers Mr. Tebbetts: not all that tall, he was quite a sight with his long white goatee and black boots that laced up sixteen inches.

A huge barn stood behind the house, and one end was raised off the ground on stilts with enough room to drive under it with a carriage. The house was not kept up all that well. There were purple lilacs overgrown all around the house. Some big old elm trees stood on the south side and a white fence of interesting construction around the north and east sides which was much like a stair banister with a double railing. Frank Tebbetts sold the farm — about 50 acres — to Israel Sack in 1919. (Letter by Marge Brooke; of Newfields, N.H. to Polly Marshall of Weston, September 9, 1974; Brisson interview; 733:110).

In 1921, Mr. Edward C. Wheeler, an antique dealer from Boston, went to look at the parlor. As the story goes, he decided to buy the entire house from Israel Sack and move it to Weston, Massachusetts. Wheeler's wife, Anne Swan (Hubbard), was the daughter of Charles Wells Hubbard and grand-daughter of Charles Townsend Hubbard. The latter had made his fortune as president of Ludlow Mills, a Massachusetts jute manufacturing company. He had a large estate in the southeast corner of Weston which his son inherited upon his death in 1887. From this, Charles Wells Hubbard conveyed an 8 acre parcel belonging to the estate to his daughter Anne in January 1922. An intent to build was expressed in the deed (Middlesex, 4488:349).

The men hired by the Wheelers to dismantle and rebuild the house spent six months labeling every piece before the moving began. The following is excerpted from a letter written by Anne Hubbard Wheeler to her sister Mary Hubbard French sometime in the 1960s:

Moved everything, except plaster and shingles (17 truck loads) — Beams — Clapboards — chimney bricks, Hearth tiles — Dutch tiles from two rooms — Panelling — even the original wallpaper ... which was put on in white parlor in 1765 — when that part of the house was built —

The wing was built in 1690, and we think originally was a salt box type. The house was built and lived in for many generations by the Burley family who were ship owners. It took a year and a half to complete the house —

At that time we put a veranda on the east opening out of the parlor —

The additions of maids quarters, laundry and garage were added in 1934 when we decided to make it our year round home.

The Wheelers called their imported home 'Glen Acres.'

In 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Biddle bought the property on Orchard Avenue in Weston. Clinton Poston Biddle (Chick), a professor of finance at Harvard Business School, died the following year. Barbara (Freeman) Biddle brought up their children:

Barbara B. Gallagher, b. Aug. 23, 1928, of Jericho, Vermont
David Kirk Biddle, b. Dec. 16, 1931, of South Dartmouth, Massachusetts
Nancy B. Bates, b. April 11, 1933, of Weston, Massachusetts
Bruce Biddle, b. Feb. 24, 1936, of Concord, Massachusetts
Susan F. Dzyacky, b. Nov. 5, 1938, of Warwick, Rhode Island

Mrs. Biddle has lived in the house for nearly 60 years. By furnishing the house with period antiques, she has retained its eighteenth century character. At the age of 92 she continues to host family gatherings at 100 Orchard Avenue. (Middlesex: 6135:44)

NOTES

[a]Newmarket became a separate parish in 1727 comprising present day Newmarket and Newfields. It was incorporated as a separate township in 1737. Newfields became a separate town in 1849.

[b]In 1644, John Wheelright wrote a letter of apology to Governor John Winthrop; subsequently the Court released his banishment. In his later years, Rev. Wheelwright was highly regarded in both New and Old England. He died in 1680 in his eighties, the last of the great seventeenth century American clergymen.

[c]Freeman: a man of 21 years who was a permanent resident (usually landowner) of a town and a member of its church. He possessed the rights to vote and to hold elective office.

[d]Great Britain did not adopt the Gregorian calendar (New Style) until 1752. Before that time March 25th marked the commencement of the legal year. Between January 1 and March 25 double dates were recorded. The first referred to the Old Style (Julian) civil and ecclesiastical year. The second figure represents the historical year which began January 1, as we know it. (Enclyclopedia Britanica, "Calendar")

[e]Sarah's tombstone, marked "wife Lt. John Burleigh," stands in the cemetery at the site of the old meeting house south of the Newmarket-Newfields town line on the west side of the highway.

[f]Rev. Cotton Mather's Magnalia Christi Americana, 1702.

[g]hogshead: a large cask containing 100-140 gallons.

[h]alewife: fish of the herring family which lives most of its adult life in the sea, but returns to fresh water in the spring to spawn.

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Rockingham County Probate Records, Exeter and Concord, New Hampshire.

Brisson, Alfred, interview in Newmarket, January 11, 1983.

Cynthia B. Bates

Weston resident Cynthia Breed Bates is working toward her Master's degree in Library and Information Science at Simmons College. She is a library assistant at the Schlesinger Library of Radcliffe College.

IN THE NEWS

ANNUAL MEETING. The annual meeting of members for the election of Directors and other business will take place on Tuesday, November 15th, 1994 at 8 p.m. in the Barn of the Josiah Smith Tavern. The speaker of the evening will be Jack Beatty, one of America's finest biographers. He will bring James Michael Curley and the rough-and-tumble world of Boston politics to life. The Rascal King, Beatty's biography of J.M. Curley, was nominated for a National Book Award in 1992. It is a vivid and lively evocation of the man and his times, and Beatty is a vivid and lively speaker, whose range of interests, as editor of the Atlantic Monthly and political columnist for the Boston Globe makes him the perfect post-election commentator. The event is free and open to the public. Come and bring your friends or favored enemies!

PUBLIC RELATIONS. In an effort to rekindle interests in our Society, this spring copies of the Bulletin were mailed town wide. They were also given to Pat Reimer, Weston's Welcome Wagon coordinator. Thanks to the Board of Directors for the many hours spent labeling and stuffing envelopes.

Window displays of Weston's history were prepared by George Amadon and Doug Henderson and shown at the Cambridge Trust and Dragon Books premises. Other businesses in town offered window space for future displays.

SLIDE SHOW PREPARATIONS. Earlier this year the Board of Directors were pleased to meet Ted Kingsbury (retired) of Wellesley, who has offered to work on preparing a narrated slide presentation on behalf of our Society. Ted has already produced slide presentations on behalf of several historical societies from Marlboro to Brookline. Ted met with the Directors and showed us his slide presentation work for the Dover Historical Society. Although Ted does not charge for his time, he does, of course, seek reimbursement for film and other small miscellaneous out-of-pocket expenses. The Board voted to accept Ted's offer to work on a slide presentation for our Society. Douglas Henderson and George Amadon from our Museum Committee have already begun working with Ted on this project. It is a time consuming effort and could very well take over a year to produce. Thanks to Doug and George for all their fine work.

FISKE LAW OFFICE. As many of you may already know, the Issac Fiske Law Office (owned by the Town of Weston and leased by the Society for $1.00/year) is in need of significant structural and cosmetic repairs. Emergency repairs were made to the roof last year but further damage to the building occured this past winter. This spring Jim Maynard arranged for contractors to inspect the office and prepare a written estimate for the needed repairs. Once a satisfactory estimate is prepared, we will be requesting funds from the Town to cover the repairs.

In the meantime, on May 21, 1994, all items were temporarily moved out of the Fiske Law Office in an effort to prevent further deterioration of the items and to protect the items from accidental damage during any construction. Boxes of books, miscellaneous papers and small artifacts were moved to the Josiah Smith Tavern and the furniture was moved to Victor and Marjorie Harnish's basement. Jim and Mary Maynard took the beautiful 15 piece stair carpeting, hand made by Betty Travis, to be professionally cleaned and restored.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION SURVEY. The Weston Historical Commission, Alfred L. Aydelott, Chairman, with matching funds from the Massachusetts Historical

Commission, conducted an eight month survey of Weston's historical and architectural resources, carried out by Pamela W. Fox, a preservation consultant and Weston resident, from October 1993 to June, 1994. This involved looking at all buildings in Weston which are at least 50 years old, choosing about 90 representative buildings for more detailed research, preparing inventory forms for eight neighborhoods, and writing a 50 page history of Weston's architecural resources. The eight areas studied were North Avenue, Kendal Green, Church Street/Coburn Area, Lower Conant Road, Case Estates, Maple Road/Wellesley Street, Love Lane, and Glen Road. The library of the Weston Historical Society was a valuable source for research material, as was the Weston Public Library, the vault at Town Hall, SPNEA library, Massachusetts State Library, Massachusetts Archives, an other area institutions. WHC would like to thank the Weston Historical Society, particularly George Amadon, Doug Henderson and Dr. Vera Laska of the Museum Committee for their assistance in making library materials available.

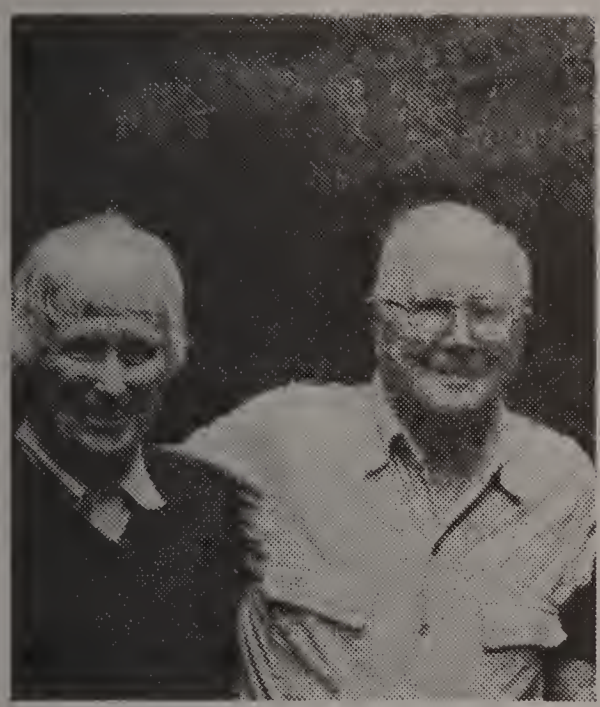
As a volunteer project coinciding with the survey, local resident Marisa Morra surveyed the interiors of most of the town's colonial period houses. For the most part, the 1993-94 survey concentrated on buildings and areas not studied in the 1970s and 1980s when the Boston Post Road was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is hoped that additional areas will be placed on the National Register as part of the next phase of WHC work. Materials produced as part of this survey are available in the office of the Planning Board, Weston Town Hall, during regular business hours. This notice was prepared by Pamela W. Fox.

ACCESS TO HISTORY, AD HOC COMMITTEE. The Weston Historical Society, The Weston Historical Commission, The Golden Ball Tavern, The Weston Public Library, and the First Parish Church have joined forces to form an ad hoc "Access to History" committee for purposes of eventually providing access to Weston's history via an intense inventory of local archival material. The project is in very preliminary stages of organization and planning. The general goals of the project today are as follows: to design and implement a workable model of archival storage in a computer indexing database accessible by current technology to Weston and other communities; to preserve and protect original documents and provide hardcopy for research; to develop a new system of archival storage to coincide with the greatly expanded new public library facility; to establish continuation funding for access to historical document in the near future; to be a model of cooperation among the many historical interest groups in Weston; to be a prototype, easily replicable by other communities.

Board member Mary Maynard sits on the committee on behalf of the First Parish Church. Board member Samuel Payson sits on the committee on behalf of the Weston Historical Commmission. Board members Sabra Jones and Douglas Henderson and Assistant Treasurer Alice Douglas presently sit on the committee on behalf of the Weston Historical Society.

GET A TAX DEDUCTION! Our still gestating Museum is in need of many things, but on the front burner right now is the need for a rug or two, hooked, braided, imitation Persian or other (we will not refuse a true Persian), the size from 3 x 6 feet and up, in usable condition. If you can help us, call Vera Laska, chairman of the Museum Committee, at 237-1447. Remember: it is tax deductible!

We are missing the March, 1968 (Vol. IV, No. 3) issue of our Bulletin. If you have one, please let us copy it. Call the above Laska number. Sorry, this is not tax deductible.



Polly and Eddie Marshall

REMEMBERING:
Edward Walker Marshall, 1905-1992

A long life, productively and happily lived, has made all of us who knew and cherished Edward W. Marshall indebted to his memory. Our town has been enriched by his constructive participation in local affairs. As the second president of the Weston Historical Society, of which he was a charter member, he ably served from November 1971 to October 1976. He was also a director of the Golden Ball Tavern.

Further afield, Eddie was an honorary trustee of Old Sturbridge Village, a fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society and a longtime member and former governor of the Massachusetts Society of Colonial Wars. A summer resident of York Harbor, Maine, he was a member of the Old York Historical Society. In 1952 he was chairman of York's 300th Anniversary celebration.

Mr. Marshall, born in Portland, Maine, was a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard University (1926) and the Harvard Business School (1928). For two years during World War II he was a leading economist in the War Production Board in Washington, D.C. From 1948 to 1968 he ran the Marshall House, the prestigious hotel on Stage Neck and Fort Point, Maine, which had been established by his grandfather, and also the Emerson House, the hotel adjacent to the Marshall House. During these same twenty years he commuted to Boston, where he was a securities analyst for Goldman Sachs.

A world traveler, Eddie rarely missed a meeting of the Harvard Travellers Club. Until age 82 he went skiing in Europe each winter. He was also long an active member of the Skating Club of Boston. Other activities included membership in the Navy League, the Newcomer Society of North America, the York Harbor Reading Room and the Volunteer Veteran's Fire Association of York Harbor.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Polly; two daughters, Anne Tarbell of Cape Elizabeth, Maine, and Jean Rae of Southport, Connecticut; a sister, Elizabeth Marshall Evans of Tequesta, Florida; and five grandchildren.

Eddie Marshall remained active and alert until the day before his death. He died as he had lived: a worthy family member and friend, a kind and gallant man. His steadfast and caring presence will continue to occupy an especially warm niche in the heart of everyone who knew him in Weston and in York Harbor.

Alice Riley

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